THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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A LOVE SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Oh, my little darling,
Your eyes are blue and bright,
Your face is like a flower,
Your heart is always light.

Oh, my little darling,
Your hair is soft and fine,
Your lips are arch and tender,
And you, oh! you are mine!

Oh, my little darling,
How rich a man am I,
In you I have a treasure,
Not gems nor gold could buy.

Oh, my little darling,
Come kiss me for my song,
Oh, kiss me often, darling,
And kiss me sweet and long.

EBEN E. REXFORD.

JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT;

OR,

HELD IN THE HIDDEN ROOM.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY FRANK CARROLL.

CHAPTER I.

THE ATTACK.

Night had fallen upon the roofs and streets of the great city. In feeble imitation of the light of the sunken sun, long lines of flashing lamps illuminated the avenues, and flung their revealing beams up the countless alleys of the City of Brotherly Love.

Poorly indeed the name of the city applied to many of the deeds of this May night, deeds deeply hidden from the eye of day, and unlit by the faint glow of the newly-kindled lamps.

At the corner of a narrow alley leading from Broad street, in the lower part of its course, stood two men, conversing at intervals, but chiefly silent and expectant, as if awaiting some one. As each of the few passers approached, the watchers withdrew into the shadows of the alley, whence, with keen glances, they read the passing face. If, perchance, the citizen caught the glare of these eyes, bent so sternly upon his face from out the thick shadows, he would move with quickened tread from the suspicious neighborhood, wondering what unlawful quest these night birds were on, for the locality was none of the safest.

Whatever their object, it seemed as if they were destined to disappointment. Numerous men had passed since their silent vigil began, some slowly sauntering by, others hasting as if fearful to miss a train or an appointment; some singly; some in chatting and smoking groups; but after each passage they withdrew from their covert, impatient and angry at the failure of their quest.

"There's no use waiting," said one of them, at length, in a hoarse voice. "He won't come this way; that's sure as shooting. Most likely he's took the Thirteenth street cars, and is safe in the depot afore this."

"He never rides," replied the other, in more melodious tones. "I fear, though, that he has taken some other street, or has decided not to go to-night, and thus has avoided us."

"It's not fifteen minutes from train time, and he's likely safe aboard while we're waiting here."

"We will try the depot, then. I will have to make some excuse if I should find him there. While I talk with him you can use your eyes."

"Don't be talking nonsense. Do you s'pose I'll shut them, Mr. Pass—"

"No names, Corbin. Names are ugly things to use in cases like this. Call me Jones, if you want a name. Come, we will try the depot."

A few moments' walk brought them to the station of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Railroad. As they approached the illuminated and bustling scene, the man called Corbin fell back, at a hint from his companion, who stepped briskly ahead and entered the wide open doors of the station.

The light, that now fell full upon him, revealed a short, rather stout person, well but not obtrusively dressed, with a dark but handsome face, and a certain brusqueness of manner that seemed to indicate a frank disposition.

The other, who stood a couple of yards behind, staring vacantly around the large room, had the dress and appearance of a mechanic, save that his hands were too white for a man accustomed to labor. But as many modern mechanics are simply superintendents of self-working machinery, there was nothing noticeable in this. He wore a thick, untrimmed black beard, and in the firm set of his lips and a certain fierceness in his glance, were evidences of a bold, energetic nature.

A long line of men were pressing to the ticket office, extending to the street door in a bending, snake-like curve.

"Hey, Passmore," suddenly cried a voice from the front of this line. "What brings you down here? How about the shipment I left you attending to?"

"It is off, you may depend on that."

The first speaker turned to get his ticket. He was a man of uncertain age, that might have been guessed anywhere between forty and sixty. A few gray threads interlaced his scanty hair, and his face had the saddened, care-worn expression of one who is weary of the battle of life, and needs rest from toil. It lacked not energy, however, and displayed an aspect of business shrewdness to which his somewhat Jewish cast of countenance contributed.

"But you have not answered my first question," he said, taking Passmore by the arm, and leading him out of the throng. "How did you discover that I was going by this train, that I find you here? When I left you I had not decided on going to-day. And what is your object in wishing to see me again?" There was a slight imperativeness of tone mingled with the surprise of his question.

"Oh," said Passmore, with a laugh, "I had not the slightest expectation of finding you here; though, of course, I knew that it was quite possible that I should see you. I received a note this afternoon from Mullen & Co. of Baltimore, saying that Mr. Mullen would be in town by this evening's train. I thought it best to meet him here, and to cling to him like a leech. There is no doubt, with good management, a profitable order can be got from him."

"Very good, John," said the other, with an approving smile, "I see you are alive to business. But bleed him gently. Don't let the lancet be seen."

"Trust me for that," he replied, looking carelessly around.

Corbin stood a short distance off, at one side, his eyes glancing over the whole scene, and not specially regarding the two talkers.

A slight but expressive sign from Passmore was instantly caught, and the seeming mechanic placed himself in the line of passengers, pressing on toward the ticket-office.

The elderly gentleman had purchased a through ticket to Richmond, which also seemed to be Corbin's destination, as he obtained a ticket for the same city.

Meanwhile the two had walked forward conversing, to the train entrance.

"Good-bye, then, Mr. Willing," said Passmore, shaking hands earnestly with him. "I can only hope that you will return invigorated in health, and with a powerful business constitution. I have no doubt that before the long time you have named is a fourth ended, you will be back to the joys and sorrows of dry goods."

"We shall see," said Mr. Willing, returning his warm pressure of the hand. "I think I will prove myself in earnest. Good-bye!" The next minute he had passed through the gate, and was entering a car.

Passmore turned to find Corbin, like an evil genius, at his elbow. He moved to one side, out of hearing of the passing throng.

"You know his face now, thoroughly?" he eagerly asked.

"Well as I know yours," the other replied. "I know him from the top hair of his head to the heel of his boot. Joe Corbin don't have his eyes five minutes on a man, and then take him for somebody else."

"There is the bell! The train will start in a minute. You want no further instructions?"

"I want no instructions at all," said Corbin, roughly. "Jest say, there's a man in my way; here's the necessary needful; and the job's done. You can bet high on that."

With a wicked look out of his black eyes, Corbin turned from his somewhat pallid companion, passed through the gate, and sprang on the train, just as it commenced to move.

We will not follow the course of the rapidly rolling train southward. Corbin, in his apparent search for a seat, attempted to satisfy himself of the locality of the man of whom he was in pursuit. Failing to do so, he became convinced that Mr. Willing had taken a sleeping car; and so, satisfied that the object of his quest was safe for the night, he coiled himself up in the corner of a seat, and was soon sound asleep.

The succeeding day he watched with the vigilance of a detective, lest his prey should stop over at some intermediate station, and so escape him. But Mr. Willing had no such intention, and continued his journey without a pause until they arrived at Richmon, where he took the hotel coach of the Marsden House.

Convinced that he had, for the present, treed his game, Corbin cautiously avoided this hotel, and sought an humble house in the vicinity, where he paid his board in advance, to compensate for his lack of baggage; making various inquiries about the

The letter read like an enigma, but was perfectly clear to Passmore. "Mr. Jones. The game's plade. The dog's dead. Clubs is trumps. I've had my deel, and won on the red. It's your turn to shuffle the Jos."

state of the labor market, by way of giving a presumptive idea of his business there.

Mr. Willing's object seemed to be principally relaxation from business cares, and a general building-up of the tone of his system. His time was spent between rest in his room, or in the reading-room of the hotel, varied by moderate exercise in the shape of visits to the principal institutions of the city—and in short drives round its environs.

After a week spent in this way, he seemed to gain more inclination for out-door life, having made several acquaintances at the hotel, who undertook, with true Southern hospitality, to give him a fuller insight into life in Richmond than he could have hoped to gain without aid.

Meanwhile, Corbin appeared solely occupied in looking for work, and skilfully concealed the vigilant surveillance which he really kept over every movement of his fellow-traveller. Sauntering carelessly past the Marsden House, or indolently pausing in front of its marble colonnade, and occasionally dropping into its elegant bar-room, calling for a drink to cover his object, he was enabled to keep Mr. Willing constantly under his eye. But time was passing, and his object, whatever, it may have been, seemed no nearer accomplishment than at first.

As he stood one afternoon leaning against one of the marble columns of the hotel doorway, misty clouds of segar smoke curling over his head as he heedlessly surveyed the constant stream of citizens ebbing and flowing through this main street of the city, one of Mr. Willing's new-made friends drove up in a light carriage to the door of the hotel, and called to his friend, who stood just within the doorway.

"Mr. Willing, I am as good as my word. Here is the team promised. But, as bad luck would have it, I shall not be able to accompany you in your drive, as I have some pressing business which I must attend to at once."

"Perhaps some other afternoon will suit you better. I would prefer to wait for your company," said Mr. Willing.

"Yet to-day is so fine for driving. If the the roads were not so intricate, I would insist on your going without me. But I fear you would never find the place."

"Give me the directions. I trust I shall be able to find it."

"I might as well give directions to go through a labyrinth. Let me see if I can find some one to drive you to New Grange."

Corbin, who had been intently listening, now threw away his segar and stepped forward hat in hand.

"You'll excuse me, gents," he said, "but I heard what you said. And, as I've nothing jest now to do, I'd like to turn a penny by driving out the gentleman."

"Do you know the road?"

"As well as I know the nose on my face."

"Then, Mr. Willing, I don't suppose you can spend your afternoon more pleasantly than by letting this honest-looking fellow drive you out to New Grange."

"I thank you for giving me the opportunity."

"No thanks are due. I am happy to be able to oblige you."

"Are you accustomed to handling horses, my friend?" said Mr. Willing. "These animals are blooded, and appear restive. They will need an experienced hand at the reins."

"Drive them! Well, I've driven a four-in-hand in my time of as skittish hor-es as ever pulled together in harness. And no one ever heered of Dick Johnson being run away with."

"All right, then," said the Virginian. "Be careful not to touch them with the whip. They won't stand it. Good day, Mr. Willing. Keep them as long as you wish. If you prefer to stay over night at the plantation, don't hesitate to do so. Use my name freely."

"Many thanks, Mr. Wilson, for your kindness; which I hope to have the opportunity to return soon."

"Don't talk of returning it. If the chance comes I won't stop long in availing myself of it, you can depend on that. And now, good-day, I must be off."

In a few minutes more the team, under the really skillful handling of Corbin, drove rapidly up the street, toward the western side of the city.

It was a splendid May day. A light haze covered the sky and tempered the fervor of the sun, and a soft west wind came blowing through the streets and over the open fields of the environs, with an invigorating touch that lent new life to the somewhat languid frame of the overworked Philadelphian.

Corbin, with perfect assurance, drove onward, soon turning from the main road and winding through a multiplicity of lanes, until Mr. Willing began to appreciate the completeness of the labyrinth of which his friend had spoken. He thanked his good fortune that he had not attempted this difficult route alone, but had obtained a driver who so thoroughly knew the way.

And this driver, with the most utter ignorance of where he was and whither he was tending, except that he was following a general westerly direction, and getting farther away from the city, drove on recklessly, with a wild pleasure at finding himself so utterly at sea.

Growing fields of wheat, corn, tobacco, and other products, rose on all sides round them. Neat plantation houses peered out from embowering trees, and a general aspect of thrift and of rural beauty marked the whole scene.

For several hours they had driven thus, and night was rapidly approaching, with no signs of the promised locality.

"Come, my friend," said Mr. Willing, beginning to get a little anxious about the situation, though reassured whenever he noticed the fine driving and perfect confidence of his coachman. "Are we not getting near our destination? Night will be on us in a half hour, and I would not like to be belated in this unsatisfactory country."

"All right, sir," said Corbin, cheerfully. "We will be there in less than half an hour. It's a long drive, as Mr. Wilson told you." As he spoke his eyes wandered keenly around him, noting every feature of the landscape, and he now, with a pressure on the left rein, turned the horses short into a narrow road that ran for a short distance through planted fields, and then entered an extensive piece of woodland that rose darkly before them.

"It lies not far 'tother side of that bit of wood," said the driver, pointing forward with his whip, and giving the horses a sharp touch with the lash that stirred their hot blood to fever heat. With a quick bound they rushed forward, dragging the carriage after them as though it was a feather.

"Don't try that again!" cried Mr. Willing. "Those animals won't stand the whip."

"They've got to stand it if I choose to give it to them," said Corbin, savagely. "I'd like to see the horse that will get the best of me." He pulled strongly at the reins as if to stop their wild career, but at the same time laid on the lash more keenly than before.

The leap they now made as they entered the borders of the wood was really alarming, and it seemed for an instant as if the carriage would be dashed to atoms against some of the huge trunks that bordered the narrow road.

Mr. Willing turned to the driver with all the energy and fire of his nature in his face, looking at him with a mixture of sternness and wonder at his audacity.

"My friend," he said, in low but meaning tones, "if you think to play with me, you may find that you have the wrong man to deal with. If you dare lash those horses again I will take the reins in my own hands, and if that does not satisfy you, will throw you out of the carriage, and leave you to foot your way home."

Corbin measured him with his eye and then looked at his own vigorous frame, with a burst of insulting laughter, then rose to his feet and grasping the reins with one hand raised the whip as if intending to bring it down with full force on the half-maddened animals.

Before he could do so it was torn from his hand and flung from the carriage. The next instant, by a simultaneous movement, the two men had grappled, and were locked in fierce contention.

It had been Corbin's object to irritate his companion to this point, satisfied that with his superior strength he could easily hurl him into the road, and so accomplish the murderous object which he had in view.

But he reckoned partly without his host. It was the grasp of no weak invalid that was flung around his form, but that of a sinewy and vigorous man, and it needed his utmost efforts to avoid being himself hurled headlong into the road.

The dangerous combat did not last half a minute. The horses feeling no restraint from the reins, dashed forward at full speed, and, striking a stump at the road-side, the carriage was instantly overturned, hurling the two combatants to the ground.

Mr. Willing fell undermost, saving Corbin from danger, while the weight of his antagonist added doubly to the violence of the shock with which he struck the ground. The driver rose to his feet and looked down savagely on his pallid and insensible antagonist. He turned him over with his foot and found the blood flowing freely from a wound in his skull. He felt his pulse, it was motionless.

"Dead as a door nail!" he muttered. "I've earnt my wages, but the sooner I get out of this the better, for sure as I live there's a team coming."

The next minute he was gone, leaving the pallid, breathless face turned up to the darkening sky, while the maddened horses tore along with the fragments of the carriage at their heels, to spread in Richmond the next day a universal alarm.

CHAPTER II.

THE COUNTING HOUSE.

The huge wholesale dry-goods house of Willing & Son, situated on the lower portion of Market street, had closed business for the day. One by one, clerks, salesmen and porters had departed, till in the vast building but two persons remained, and one of these had just entered.

With the other of these persons we are already partly acquainted, he being none other than the John Passmore whom we have seen under very different circumstances.

He now lounged at his ease in a revolving counting-house chair, airily puffing from his segar misty wreaths of smoke, which floated lazily upward.

"Hal, my boy, help yourself to a chair. I am too lazy to be polite, or I might assist you. You have got the start of me to-day."

"Yes. You are rather late," said the other, leisurely seating himself.

"That Western shipment has detained us a little. How is business?"

"It keeps fair for the season."

"So much the worse. Winter for business, Summer for rest and recreation, is my motto. By the way, I hear you are living a good deal out of town lately. How about that up-river country-seat, eh?"

"You have struck the right string. That is what brought me around to-night."

"To confess and be forgiven? Right, my boy, I will be easy on you."

"So you have been told of my visits to Thornton?"

"Guessed at them, nothing more. Helped by an outside hint or two, I admit. So Thornton is the name of the place. The name is suggestive. The rose and thorn bloom together. Have you yet found the rose?"

"Thereby hangs a tale."

"I judge so by your guilty blush. Come, Harry, lad, what have you been going and doing, without taking counsel of your experienced friend? Trusting to your own youthful impulses again! It won't do. It won't do."

He leaned back in his chair, with a decidedly paternal expression of countenance, and exhaled smoke from his lips with the gusto of a true devotee of the weed.

His companion, a tall and rather slender young man, with a clear blonde complexion and regular features, was strangely contrasted in appearance to John Passmore, the somewhat rough frankness of the latter being replaced by an open ingenuousness of countenance in the former, far more calculated to inspire confidence in the truly discerning.

He was tastefully dressed in light summer apparel, well suited to the sultry season; and bore, in every point of his voice and manner, the impress of the trained and native gentleman.

"Condemn, if you must, but hear me," said Harry, in tragic tones. "You remember my trip last summer to the Vermont mountain region?"

"Don't I! I can't well forget the breezy superiority of your letters to us sweltering stay-at-homes in this sultry city."

"I did not tell all, or your envy would have been doubly magnified. There, in a certain delicious little mountain valley, I found—"

"A girl! a girl! I'll bet a thousand it was one of those petticoated angels which you romantic fellows are always finding."

"Neither girl exactly, nor exactly angel; but that happy medium—"

"Yes, yes, I've heard it all twenty times. Save your raptures, Hal, for your angel. Don't waste them on me."

"I should be sorry to entertain you with romance, or waste my sweetness on such a desert air. Suffice it then, to make a long matter short, I fell in love."

"You! In love! With a Green Mountain gal! Angel, angel—don't redden up. A milkmaid lass, tripping afield at the heathenish hour of five o'clock in the morning, brown as a berry, unconventional as a South Sea islander, and silly as a kitten. Oh, that the elegant Harry Graham, the pet of the ladies, dare confess to so ignoble a choice! Caught at last, after running the gauntlet of endless pairs of languishing eyes and kissable lips, by a twinkling ankle, and a saucy glance. After such a relapse I give you up to your doom. It will be no light sentence that society will pronounce on you."

"A fig for society. But I must say that I don't recognize my lady in your lass. Your picture is very good as an effort of the imagination, but does not square well with the fact. She is unsophisticated, that I grant, and with supreme satisfaction. But all else that makes the lady, beauty, accomplishments, culture, social tact and dignity, she has in the fullest measure."

"And how am I to know if this female paragon exists in your love-sick fancy only, or in the land of the living?"

"That is what I am coming to. I would not have breathed a word of the affair to an acknowledged cynic like you but that I am able to substantiate my words."

"In short then the girl has left her Vermont valley, and seeking her paladin through the world, has landed at Thornton, in the vicinity of Philadelphia," said Passmore, carelessly, as he rose and flung away the stump of his cigar.

"She is making a visit there, I grant."

"And you are making several visits there. Well, Harry, I congratulate you, and hope you will let me have some chance to set eyes on this lady of your love. What, are you going?"

"Yes, I have an engagement. I will be glad to introduce you to Miss Worthington at as early a date as you may desire."

"Miss—who?" asked Passmore, in a slightly startled tone, suddenly throwing off his listless air.

"Miss Alice Worthington. Why, have you any knowledge of her?"

"None at all. That pleasure remains for me in the future. I shall be happy to pass my valuable judgment on your choice at an early date, and will soon settle the question of your gullibility or good taste. Good-night, Hal, I will be soon after you. Don't take my bantering ill."

"I know you much too well for that, John. Only that I am sure you wear a heart under that cynical coat of mail, few secrets would I whisper to you. Good-night be it, then."

With a grasp of the hand he was out of the door, and treading the half-deserted street.

"Know me, do you?" said Passmore, looking grimly through the half-open door. "I hope you will never come to know me more really. But that name. It took me me like a shot between wind and water. If fancy is right there may be some new luck opening."

He drew a well-filled pocket-book from out the breast pocket of his coat, and opened it with hasty, nervous fingers.

Drawing out a handful of papers he rapidly assorted them, making a quick examination of each.

"Ah, here it is. It was well I saved that bit of an old letter. Now to see if my memory is correct."

Opening the fragment of manuscript he read aloud, as follows:

"Alice, their child I will. I knew Mary Worthington at a glance, from her close resemblance to you, though brother and sister have been so long parted. I fear that Alice will be soon orphaned, as her only surviving parent is in delicate health."

"Right!" cried he, excitedly crushing the paper in his hand. "The game is mine!"

He replaced the document, and carefully locking the store door behind him, strode out into the street.

"There is only one point amiss so far," he muttered, "that Joe Corbin knows who I am. But there was no disguising my identity from him; and besides, the fellow is a sterling rascal. He has never yet been known to tell a secret, or to leave an open track behind him."

Passing on up Market street, he turned down Ninth, and shortly after rang the bell of a house on the latter street, entering the door. Waiting in the hall he was immediate-

ly reconnoitered through an opening in an internal door, which was then flung wide open. He at once passed up stairs and entered a large room on the second floor.

At one end of this room several persons were seated, busily engaged at cards. Near them was a table plentifully covered with lunch. But the main point of interest lay at the lower end of the room. Here a dozen or more persons were seated or standing around a table, on whose surface was painted the representation of the successive cards of a pack. Here and there upon these cards lay small heaps of red or white counters, on which the bystanders gazed with the strongest interest.

Behind the table sat a person who drew card after card from a pack in a tin box, and laid them in two heaps on the table; after each card so placed, either taking or doubling the counters placed on the similar card. It was in short the renowned game of faro, in full play.

Passmore was greeted warmly by several present, and stood silently for some time before the table watching the game.

"Ain't you going to try your luck, Mr. Jones?" said the banker, who sat by a partly opened drawer, half filled with bank notes.

"Not to-night," replied the soi-disant Jones, waving back the heap of counters which the banker pushed toward him. "By the way where is Joe? He is generally in busy play here, but I don't see him to-night."

"That's more than I can tell. He hasn't been here for nigh a week, which is something unaccountable. He must be out of town, though Joe likes faro better than he does his country-seat."

"So I thought myself," said Passmore, lightly whistling as he strode to the other end of the hall, watched a moment the game proceeding there, stopped a moment more and helped himself at the refreshment table, and then walked out of the room.

"It is not done yet," he thought, as he gained the street. "If Corbin had reached the city he would have put in an appearance at Taylor's bank before he was here two hours. But I am nervously impatient. Quick despatch of such work as he has on hand is often dangerous. But if he should fail, and be caught in the effort—"

A strong shudder passed through his frame as this thought entered his mind. Hardened and cold-blooded as he was, the fear of detection, at least, could shake the nerves of this iron man.

CHAPTER III.

"BOB WHITE."

The reader must now accompany us to the country residence called Thornton. It was a charming cottage-built mansion, pleasantly situated on the Delaware, several miles above the city. From the house to the river ran a rich green sward, terraced at the river bank, and covered at the side with a thick growth of trees, though open between the house and the river. Here there was nothing more prominent than a few flower-beds to break the general verdant level.

The house was occupied by a Mr. Walker and family, a city merchant who resided here the year round. Alice Worthington had made the acquaintance of this family during their summer excursion, several years before, and was now paying them a long-promised visit.

Several days have passed since the conversation just detailed, and the two parties are now at Thornton, Passmore having taken the first opportunity to obtain an introduction to the affianced of his friend.

We find the three seated on rustic benches under cover of the trees on the river bank, watching the rapid flow of the tidal water, and sustaining a general conversation, in which Passmore takes a prominent part.

Miss Worthington was truly all and more than the partial description of her lover had made her. Tall and of elegant figure, with rich brown eyes, and features of the most refined regularity, she impressed every observer with the idea of high culture; which displayed itself on every line of her beautiful face. The effect of her face was heightened by an expression of unconventional frankness, the result of her country training.

"Do tell me this story about Mr. Willing," she was saying, at the moment of our intrusion. "I heard something about it from Mr. Walker, but am inclined to think that he does not correctly understand it."

"He might easily do so, as it is a plain matter," said Passmore. "Mr. Willing has been conducting business for many years, and has achieved a large fortune. But of late he has seemed to be utterly worn out with business cares and worries. He could not stay in Philadelphia and keep dry goods out of his mind, and so concluded to make a long tour, of perhaps several years' duration. He has strictly forbidden any letters being sent him, except of the most vital importance, and will, probably, keep secret his route, so that no one can pester him with business against his will."

"And his property is to take care of itself till his return?"

"Oh, that will be managed between your joint friends. Harry and I are left in full charge, with powers plenipotentiary. He is lord of the retail, and I of the wholesale department; our only special instructions being to do as we please, and make the most of the talent left in our charge."

"Certainly liberal powers. I did not know that you two were so closely connected with the affair. Harry, here, never talks business. He might live in Timbuctoo, and be here on a visit of pleasure, for all he has told me to the contrary."

"I never carry the shop with me," said Harry, "but shake the dust of business from my feet as I leave the store door. Wait till you come to town shopping. You shall then see my powers as a haberdasher."

"A dashing one, I have no doubt. It would do me good to see you retailing pins and needles, and dwelling on ribbons as if they were the only things in life worth living for."

"I shall be sorry to disappoint you, but I am not exactly in that line."

"No, indeed," said Passmore, "his dainty hands are never laid on anything less patrician than velvets or satins."

"I can appreciate his taste. But this questioning looks decidedly like curiosity on my part, and I will not admit myself curious. I have some previous knowledge of Mr. Willing, and wished to know about his movements; that was all."

"Your questions are perfectly correct. We have no business secrets; eh, Harry."

"None, so far as I am concerned."

"Hear that persistent fellow, how he whistles there behind us," said Passmore, as the clear whistle of a partridge rang in the thicket behind them. "I am going back to see if I cannot set eyes on his whistling majesty."

"His note is not perfectly made. It sounds more like an imitation," said the lady.

"A young bird, probably," said Passmore, as he strode carelessly away. The lovers thanked him mentally for his consideration in thus giving them an opportunity for a *tête-à-tête*, for such they supposed the object of his movements.

But a far different idea actuated John Passmore. He moved cautiously through the grove in the direction of the sound, following a well-trodden path through the undergrowth that made a thicket of the back part of the wooded space.

The partridge continued whistling, undisturbed by his approaching steps. Looking heedfully back and around, as if fearful of being observed, Passmore answered by a low, similar note.

This imitative whistle had a remarkable effect. Instead of the bird taking wing, and darting, with the whirr of the partridge, from this dangerous presence, the bushes in front opened, revealing a remarkable human figure, who stood there, framed in green, a most incongruous element of the scene.

It was a Yankee counterpart of the celebrated *gamin* of Paris; a boy of twelve, with the keen eyes and shrewd visage of a rogue of twenty-four. His face and hands, innocent of soap, and his hair, innocent of comb, were striking illustrations of what nature can do for such of her noble sons as abhor the weaknesses of civilization.

As to dress, what little he endured, he was truly a thing "of shreds and patches." Some one had been careful enough of his attire to cover every rent with a piece of stuff, selected for size only, not for style or color, so that he presented an aspect far more variegated than the most perfect rainbow.

His head gear was a piece of general utility properly, and seemed to have done duty for a hundred other purposes. Coat and shoes he had none, but had coated his feet and ankles with a tight-fitting pair of mud stockings, woven out of some ditch bottom in the vicinity.

This strange creature stood looking at his visitor, with a wink of his right eye, and an intelligent leer on his visage, while he again gave vent to the peculiar "Bob White" call of the American quail.

Passmore approached the boy with an eagerness that showed an improbable community of interests between the street vagabond and the polished gentleman.

"Patsy, what brings you here?"

"Them fellers," said the boy, pointing to his discolored feet, "and a little lift on the cars."

"But who sent you? What do you want here? Is your Uncle Joe home?"

"You bet he is. And a picture he was, too, wid his clothes tore half off, and his face scratched like pisen."

The boy had a slight Milesian accent, which betrayed his origin, though his general idiom was strongly American.

"Well?" questioned Passmore.

"He couldn't turn out hisself jest yet, so I come. Knew you was here, cos I watched you, and come up on the same train—fourth-class passage. Here's the whole thing, writ on a bit of paper; and Uncle Joe kin write, you bet."

The lad winked at his companion without a particle of reverence or respect. Thoroughly imbued with the democracy of the streets, the idea of difference of station, or of respect due to aught but visible dollars and cents, had never crossed his mental vision. As to politeness, it was not taught in his school.

It was a formidable undertaking to get into Patsy's pocket, and to select the "bit of paper," from its multitude of contents. But after much striving, success was achieved and the note handed over.

Passmore tore it open with feverish haste, and devoured at one glance its ill-written and spelt, but highly-interesting contents. It read like an enigma:

"Mister Jones—The game's plade. The dog's dead. Clubs is trumps. I've had my deal an won on the red. It's your turn now to shuffle the keards, and deel to my hand. Come to the rookery an bring the inducements. An' quick too. Delays is dangerous. I'll tell yo how the keards run when I see ye. JOE."

This mysterious document was perfectly clear to its reader. He shuddered with involuntary dread as he caught its terrible meaning, and instantly tore it into fragments, while a smile of satisfaction followed his momentary spasm of compunction.

The boy, who watched his changing face with a shrewd intelligence far beyond his years, now handed him a newspaper, pointing out a particular passage. His companion read this with yet deeper interest than he had read the note.

"That will do, Patsy. Tell Joe I will see him, and now you had better be off."

"Very fine, Mr. Jones, but if you calkerlate that I'm going to walk back, ye'er off your eggs, and a feller can't steal a ride every load of poles."

"Here, then, you can ride first-class, if you want, and have the price of a Turkish bath left. It will be a blessing to let your skin see daylight again."

"I'll try it, danged if I won't. I hain't had a good wash for a year, 'cept when I've been caught out in the rain, and left my umbreller at home. Does it hurt, Mr. Jones? Don't they ever take the skin off?"

"There is no danger in your case. You will have your dollar's worth before they get near the skin."

"It's a rum go. If I don't do it, dang me," said the boy flinging his hat into the air, and catching it on his head as it fell. The next instant he disappeared in the bushes behind him. At intervals the clear whistle of the partridge was again heard gradually sinking in the distance.

This conversation had been conducted in low tones, so as not be heard by the lovers, who remained blissfully ignorant of the strange interlude taking place so near them.

Mr. Passmore now reappeared from the bushes and joined them.

"Well, John, my bird-fancier, what success in your partridge hunt?" asked his friend Harry.

"Fine, fine, Hal. I saw a wing of the bird as it shot over the bushes yonder. If I had had a gun, and known how to use it, we might have had a remote chance of a partridge dinner."

"Infinitely remote, I fear."

"I am glad to see that you are no sportsman," said Miss Worthington. "I have no respect for those burly, six-foot individuals, whose idea of sport is the slaughter of the most innocent birds, and for the more zest of killing."

Passmore seemed disinclined to converse. After a few words more he left the conversation to the other two, and, drawing a newspaper from his pocket, became deeply absorbed in its contents.

He continued thus, apparently reading, for about ten minutes, when he broke the silence by a loud, alarming exclamation, rising to his feet and dropping the paper, seemingly overcome by a violent agitation.

"Why, John, what is the matter?" cried Harry, leaping to his feet in alarm, while Miss Worthington sat with her eyes wide open in astonishment.

"Oh, it is too horrible! It cannot be true!" he said, in low, trembling accents as he pointed to the paper at his feet.

Harry picked it up, and looked up inquiringly at his friend, who pointed out the passage that had affected him.

It was by no act of deliberate reading, but by a species of intuition that Harry Graham took in the full sense of this terrible paragraph.

He stood stupefied with horror and amazement, while Miss Worthington gazed over his shoulder at the passage yet marked by his trembling hand.

"What, my un—, Mr. Willing, murdered!" she cried in some confusion, as she stopped herself at the word she was about to utter.

She again read the passage; this time more particularly.

"But these do not appear to be just grounds for the suspicion of murder, which the writer of this paragraph has made. The horses return to Richmond with the fragments of the carriage behind them. Evidences are found in a wood which appear to me to prove a runaway. Blood, and a diamond sleeve-button of Mr. Willing's are found on the ground, but he himself has disappeared, and is not to be found. He and the driver have, probably, both been injured by being thrown from the carriage, and will, no doubt, be found in some of the country houses in the vicinity."

Harry Graham almost snatched the paper from her hand, in his eagerness to re-read the article under the light of her remarks. His face visibly lightened up as he did so.

"I should not wonder, indeed, if you were correct. Alice, your quick discernment is far in advance of our halting wits. But, then, the people at Richmond may have judged from minor circumstances, which could not be included in a telegraphic statement. One of us must go to Richmond at once and look into this terrible affair; and, if you have no objection, John, I propose to undertake it."

"I was just about making the same proposition. I have, however, pressing matters of business just now, which cannot well be set aside, so will give you the post of honor."

Alice could not help looking slightly disappointed at the arrangement.

"Will you be long gone?" she asked.

"Not long, I hope. I am strongly inclined to the belief that you are right in your judgment, and that Mr. Willing may be found by this time, not dangerously hurt."

"I sincerely hope so," said Passmore, with utter composure of face and tone, despite the painful throes of conscience which he found it impossible to still.

"I will take a detective with me. It may add greatly to my chances of success to obtain the aid of one accustomed to make much of the slight traces."

"Perhaps so. Though from my experience of these detective gentry I think you would do as well or better without them."

"It will do no harm, even if it does no good, to have one along. There is the professional, whom we employed at the late robbery. Williams, I think he was called. Though he had no success then, he appeared to be a shrewd and ready man."

A slight smile curled Passmore's lip as this was said. He seemed to have a happy thought.

"Take Williams with you then. He is, no doubt, an experienced hand."

"This matter is too urgent to admit of a moment's delay. We must return to the city at once and make the necessary preparations. I cannot drive from my mind the dreadful fear that Mr. Willing, the best, kindest of men, may have left home only to meet death in this horrible manner. If so, and it should prove indeed a murder, I pledge myself to use all my means and intelligence to bring the murderer to justice. I know that you, John, join with me in this determination."

"I do, indeed," said Passmore, with simulated earnestness, his face, in spite of his self-control, blanched to the paleness of death.

"We must bid you good-bye, Alice. I am sorry that our pleasant visit should be so sadly ended. But so it is in all life; the darkest clouds shut out the brightest sunshine."

"But, the reverse is equally true, the bright sunshine breaks through the darkest clouds. Let us hope that it will soon break through this sudden gloom. Good-bye, Mr. Passmore. I am happy to have had the pleasure of your visit, and hope you may be induced to repeat it."

"If I yield to inclination you shall see me often, Miss Worthington," he replied, as he grasped her extended hand.

"Thanks," she replied, "I beg you will not fail then to yield to inclination."

"There is little danger of that," he replied smiling, as he walked toward the house, leaving the two lovers to say their adieus without the embarrassment of a listener.

"Well, what do you think of my friend John?" asked Harry.

"I like him ever so much," she frankly replied, "and am in earnest in my request to see more of him."

We will not intrude further on the parting of the lovers. In a short time the two friends were in the cars rolling city-ward.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROOKERY.

In one of the most disreputable parts of Shippen street stood a wide-fronted building, erected in that peculiar style of brick-work which distinguishes the comparatively few buildings of the past yet remaining in the city.

It had been in its day, a fine mansion; but, for generations, had been falling to base uses, till now it did not ill deserve the name which heads this chapter. The front room of the old mansion was now converted into a tavern, as its sign proclaimed, but which would be better described by the less reputable name of grog-shop.

On its front window was painted in large gilt letters the following sign:

"THE ROOKERY, BY JOE CORBIN."

The retailing of ardent spirits, however, was but one out of many uses which the roomy old house subserved. In fact the bar-room, in spite of its gaudy display and active business, was partly intended for a blind, and the house had many a secret of which the boozy customers of its front room little dreamed.

There was a secret entrance from a small, unfrequented street at the back, well-known to and often trodden by persons of whom the police were in active search. The proceeds of certain large burglaries had found their way to the interior of the rookery, there to remain till the modern process of accommodation between loser and thief permitted them to be brought to the light again. There were still darker secrets connected with the old house, but these remained firmly locked in the memory of its unscrupulous keeper, unknown even to the most lawless of its visitors.

Joe Corbin knew well how to keep his own secrets, and though one or two of the detective force knew and winked at the doings above-mentioned, the shrewdest of them suspected nothing of these darker mysteries.

The mansion had been specially arranged for the peculiar purposes to which it was now applied, and contained hiding-places and secret rooms, possessed of mysteries which the world had yet failed to discover.

Joe, to the world at large, was a reputable, law-abiding citizen. His house bore no worse savor than naturally attaches to a grog-shop; and, as already mentioned, of the police force only one or two knew any more concerning it. It had, it is true, the reputation among the more knowing of being a private gambling-house, and this served to explain the mysterious entrances, when observed by the patrolling police. Its owner had indeed, the better to sustain this idea in case of a domiciliary visit, devoted an apartment on the lower floor to this purpose, and frequently very heavy sums were lost and won by the lawless frequenters of the rookery.

He himself was a devoted lover of faro, and succeeded in rapidly losing the large sums made by his nefarious processes. Taylor's bank, already described, was a heavy winner of Joe's loose funds. It was partly desperation at these losses that made him ever ready to embark in new schemes of lawlessness, and to his cold-blooded, tigerish disposition murder itself was but an event of importance in the replenishing of his pocket-book.

On the night of the day in which we left the two friends returning to the city from their visit to Thornton, after darkness had fully declared itself, a well muffled person appeared in the alley back of the rookery. Groping along the fence, the gate suddenly flew open, as if from the touch of a hidden spring.

Entering he carefully closed it behind him and advanced to the rear door of the house, at which he gave a low, peculiar knock. The door was thrown open by a young man, who looked sharply at the visitor.

"What name, sir?" he asked.

The visitor advanced and whispered a word in his ear.

"All right, sir," was the reply.

"Is Joe at home?"

"Yes."

"Tell him, quietly, that Jones wishes to see him."

"Very well, sir," he replied, leading the visitor to an inner room, where he left him.

He was absent scarcely a minute when he returned, and asked Passmore, for it was he, to follow him.

He led the way up-stairs to a pleasantly-furnished front room where Corbin sat awaiting him.

Beyond two or three slight scratches, his face showed no signs of the marks of which Patsy had spoken, and his plain clothes had been changed for a suit of fine black.

"Is all safe here?" asked the visitor, looking cautiously around.

"Safe as the bank. My walls ain't of the kind that voices go through. You can speak loud as you please, no danger of anybody hearing."

"Go ahead then, I am ready to hear your story. Is this newspaper account true?"

"As far as it goes."

"It said that both the driver and his employer had disappeared. The driver I see is safe. Where is the other?"

"Safe, too."

"Safe?"

"Yes, as safe as six good feet of dirt, well-trod down, can make him. Do you s'pose I leave my work half-done?"

"I hope not," replied Passmore, with a breath of relief.

"Well, you can know I don't."

"Tell me the whole story," said Passmore, stretching himself back in his chair with his usual nonchalant manner, and coolly lighting a segar.

Corbin did so with full details, supplementing it with the lie he had just told of the burial of the body.

Passmore listened with far from full satisfaction, chewing his segar fiercely at certain points in the narration.

"Well, was it cleverly done?" asked Corbin.

"No. I gave you credit for more wit and coolness than you deserve."

"The deuce you did. Why what's wrong about it?"

"This is wrong, that you have made a murder of what might easily have been managed into an accident. There was plentiful evidence of a runaway. His wounds were plainly caused by the fall. You had your own scratches to show. If you had shown any wit you would have roused the neighborhood, proved the accident, and thus have evaded even the suspicion of murder, which is always dangerous."

"Talk is cheap," said Corbin, with a dark frown. "I s'pose you never done any little jobs, sich as knifing a man, or the like?"

"Well, no, I have kept clear, so far, from that sort of amusement."

"I didn't know but it was regular day's work with you from the way you talk. Do you think that a man's a piece of cast iron, and that his notions are brass clock-wheels working inside him? It's well to set there and say what you'd do in one of them places that set a man's nerves jumping like mad, and his blood boiling in his veins. I'm as cool as the next, but I'm not a piece of clock-work, that always goes right, no matter how the wind blows."

"Oh, I know all that."

"Then what are you talking about? It's not so sure neither that everything would work as you're got it laid out there. People generally aren't fools, and something might have turned up that wouldn't have been good for my health. I went on the safe lay and I reckon that it's all right."

"Suppose that Wilson should see and know you?"

"Not much danger of that, and if he did, there's the accident lay. But this isn't to the pint. Did you bring that check with you?"

"Not I."

"You didn't, eh?"

"No. Do you think my name and Joe Corbin's on a check would look well in company? Here's a little of the necessary evil of society which will answer better," he replied, as he handed to the other a large roll of bank notes.

"I ain't particular how it comes, so it comes," said the cool villain, proceeding to deliberately count the notes.

"All correct?"

"Correct as thunder," replied the other, pulling out a huge pocket-book in which he deposited the proceeds of his villainous deed.

"Then I suppose you are open for another job of work?" asked Passmore.

"Aint I always open for a good paying job?"

"This takes you back to Richmond."

"That's unfortunate."

"Not at all. Williams, the detective, is a keen hand, and would be a good one to hunt up the tracks of a certain suspected murder down there."

"Aha! I begin to smell."

"The fact is, Harry Graham, who has charge of the Eighth street store, you know, is going down there to look into the matter. He has a good opinion of Williams, from his shrewdness in the late robbery case, and proposes to take him along."

"I don't know what Williams would think of it. It isn't quite safe."

"Why not? You were disguised when you were down there as a mechanic. You can put on another disguise. Williams is not Joe Corbin, and don't look like him."

"The only pint I see is to lead him off the scent."

"And that's an important one."

"It sartainly is."

"There's a better yet, if you've the nerve for it. Harry Graham is in my way, and I would be quite as well satisfied if he should decide to stay down there."

"Aha! to stay there in company with his employer?"

"The less said the better. I have as much more to pay for a successful job. But it must be managed to be done away from there. Not within a hundred miles of Richmond, at least. What do you say?"

"When is he going?"

"To-morrow, by the first train. I have undertaken to hunt up Williams, the detective, and sound him on the matter. What answer?"

"It's risky. And I don't tell any fortunes till my hand's been crossed. I'm a little of the gypsy."

Passmore's answer was to hand over another roll of bank notes.

"It is settled, then? You know where Graham lives?"

"Yes."

"You had better go see him at once. Tell him that I met you in the street and engaged you to accompany him."

"All right."

"And—get me a drop of brandy. My nerves are a little shaky after this business, and want steadying."

Swallowing a large draught of the fiery liquid to settle the throes of his conscience as well as the unsteadiness of his nerves, the more despicable villain of the two took his leave, muffling himself up closely and going out by the route by which he had entered.

Corbin looked earnestly after him as he went out, his face grimly set, and a fierce expression on his lips.

"The bloodiest hound as I ever set eyes on, and I've seen many," he slowly ejaculated. "Well, he's good pay, and one or two men more or less in the world don't matter. There'll be enough left, and to spare."

As he spoke he was busy changing his dress, and assuming that in which he had on a previous occasion played detective. He finished by some artistic touches to his personal appearance, which quite changed the color of his hair and the style of his whiskers, while his face had grown unrecognizable.

"It's somewhat odd what did become of Willing," he muttered. "I took him to be dead, sure enough. Some fool's picked him up. But he won't get over that fall, or I'm no doctor. S'pose I find him down there alive yet? Well, maybe I'll get a chance to finish my job."

We will not accompany him in his visit to Graham. Suffice it to say that the necessary arrangements were at once made, and the earliest through train the next day took the two as passengers on their route to the capital city of the Old Dominion.

Inquiry in the city soon developed the fact that no new points had since been discovered. Mr. Wilson, the owner of the team, was decidedly in favor of the runaway hypothesis, knowing, as he did, the fiery character of his horses, when improperly handled.

He could easily account for the disappearance of the driver on the plea of absence through fear of arrest. That of Mr. Willing he considered a strange mystery, which, however, might soon be explained.

He volunteered to accompany them to the scene of the accident, and to aid them in any researches they might feel inclined to make. This offer was distasteful to the pretended detective, who had some fear of the eyes of the Virginian, which he had caught, once or twice, fixed closely on his face.

But he said nothing, and quietly took a seat with the others behind the same pair of horses which he had himself lately driven with such disastrous consequences.

The point in the wood where the event had occurred, showed now no trace of aught unusual. Passing wheels had obliterated the crimson stain by the roadside, and the fragments of the carriage had been removed.

"I do not see where or in what direction we are to make further inquiry," said Mr. Wilson. "I have had every farm-house and hamlet within miles of here thoroughly canvassed, without a trace of our missing friend being found."

The matter began to appear mysterious and dangerous to Corbin, who had left him, as he felt sure, dead or dying in the road. He remembered the wheels he had heard approaching, and conjectured that he must have been taken up by some party travelling a considerable distance from the scene. He expressed himself to this effect, adding:

"You have farmers about here who don't take the papers, and wouldn't know what was published about it. How far is the river from here?"

"About six miles."

"Is it fordable about here?"

"There is a ferry opposite us."

"And has any questions been asked on t'other side the James?"

"I think not."

"A good thought," said Graham. "We must leave no stone unturned. Had we not better cross, Mr. Wilson, and make inquiry on the other side?"

"I have no hopes from it, but we can, at least, try."

As they drove toward the ferry, Mr. Wilson turned to Corbin, who sat in the back seat of the carriage, saying:

"Excuse me, Mr. Williams, but there is something familiar to me in your face and voice. Where have I met you before?"

"Maybe in Philadelphia. I'm pretty well known there."

"I have it now," Wilson replied suddenly. "You remind me of the strange driver who drove out Mr. Willing. I did not notice him closely, it is true, but I have a rather quick eye for faces."

"What was the fellow's name?" asked the other, with complete composure, meeting with a slight smile the close regards of his companion.

"He gave the name of Dick Johnson."

"Johnson. There's no Johnsons connected with the Williamses. It wasn't a family resemblance, that's certain."

"And I can answer that Mr. Williams was not the man," said Graham. "He is a well-known and busy resident of Philadelphia, and could hardly spare time to come down here to seek a position as coachman."

"Of course I am aware that it is a mere coincidence," said Wilson, turning his eyes again to the horses, much to the relief of the unflinching Joe Corbin.

Their inquiries beyond the James appeared likely to be as futile as those on the other side. The ferryman had put across no wounded man, and neither farmers nor villagers had seen aught of Mr. Willing, alive or dead.

They drove in various directions for several miles round, making constant inquiry. At one small hamlet where they stopped to water the horses and to stretch their limbs, the pretended detective caught sight of a familiar face.

His companions had entered the hotel and did not observe his approach to and conversation with this person.

"What brings you here, Ravel?" he quietly asked.

The person addressed started as if stung by a serpent, and looked with pallid face on the speaker.

"You don't seem to know me?"

"No. Never saw you before."

"You've forgot Joe Corbin, then?"

"What! Joe! By the hokey! Well, I'll swow. What's the lay now, Joe?"

"You heard us asking about the accident on the other side of the river?"

"Yes."

"I s'pose you remember taking up the hurt man and bringing him over?"

"I don't remember any—"

"Yes, you do. You remember just what I tell you to."

We will not detail further the private talk of this interesting pair.

After a few moments, the other two emerged from the hotel and joined Corbin, who stood calmly cutting off a huge slice of tobacco, which he inserted between his teeth with great satisfaction.

"Any luck inside?" he asked.

"None," was the reply.

"I'm better off, then. I think I've struck the trail. My good fellow," he continued, addressing the man, who yet stood near him, "tell these gentlemen what you have just told me."

"Well," said the man with some uneasiness, "I was driving across there the night it happened, and heered the runaway. I driv up and found a man on the ground, with his head bad cut. I took him up and brought him to my house, down thar by Richmond, where I live when I'm at hum."

"Was he dead?" asked Graham.

"No, only stunned. He soon come to, and told me as how he had driv out a man, and been upset and thrown out the team."

"What, you don't mean to say it was the driver?"

"It sartainly was!"

"And where is Mr. Willing?" asked Wilson.

"Devil the bit do I know."

"See here, fellow!" cried Graham, excitedly, "do you know that I believe all this to be an outrageous lie?"

"Believe ahead boss, I don't keer a tin cent what you believe. Mebbe you'll tell me what I'm going to get by lying?"

"Very true," said Corbin. "You are young yet, Mr. Graham. If you had had a few years' experience as a detective you'd have less faith in human nature."

"Young or old, I know that John Willing is incapable of anything dishonorable."

"Nobody accuses him. He'll turn up all right yet. What became of this driver?"

"Wall, he stayed till he got feeling spruce. He was afeard, when he saw the piece in the paper, that he might be took up for murder, and wouldn't let me tell about him. He jist left me to-day."

"And where is he now?"

"He was to take the noon boat for Annapolis. I left him this morning, cos I had business here; but I spect he's gone."

"What do you think of this story?" asked Graham, turning to his companions.

"I see no reason to disbelieve it," said Wilson. "The man can have no motive in deceiving us, and, as I said before, the mystery of Mr. Willing's absence will, no doubt, be satisfactorily explained before long."

"And for my part," said Corbin, "I've got no theory about it, except this. If the man took the noon boat down the river, we'll take the night boat. We will likely nab him at Annapolis and find out all about it. I think it likely he can tell us more than he's told this good fellow."

"I agree with you, sir," said Wilson. "The plan is a good one."

Getting as complete a description as possible of the appearance of his pretended guest from Ravel, they drove rapidly back to Richmond, just in time to catch a small steamboat, that ran on a night line down the river as far as Norfolk.

The night proved dark and chilly, but the two companions sat on the deck talking till about ten o'clock, at which hour Graham sought his berth, leaving Corbin still sitting on the deck.

If the dove was charmed with the shrewd and homely good sense of the serpent, the latter was equally taken with the ingenuousness of the former.

The man of terrible antecedents and dark intentions sat much debating after the departure of his unsuspecting companion.

"There's this thing sartain," he said to himself, "that Passmore's a devil of the first water. I can smell his game. Willing had no known kin to look for his property. It is all in his hands to do as he chooses, if the owner be out of the way, and I'm really curious to know what's become of him. Passmore wants this boy out of his track, too, for fear he might play the honest dodge and spile his plans. And, besides, he wants to fall into the whole property. Well, he'll have to do it hisself then, and he'll have Joe Corbin to butt against. The boy has sorter took my fancy, and I wouldn't hurt a hair of his head for a dozen John Passmores. I don't know what it is about the lad. I am not easy taken with strangers. I guess it's cause he's so innocent and free-spoken like. Howsomdever I'm going to stand by him, and Jones can have his fee back again."

The night was now of intense darkness. The glow of a lamp or two faintly illuminated the deck, but the boat seemed as if steered by the instinct of its helmsman through a field of solid gloom.

Far ahead to the right shone a faint light, the only sign of life within sight.

"Ain't it a little dangerous, Cap., running ahead to-night?" asked Corbin.

"No. We'll have the moon in a few minutes. You see there's a hole in the clouds yonder, and a few stars peeping out. The moon's down there, and will have her face out in half an hour."

"Where is that light that we're steering straight onto?"

"That's from a house. There's a little bend ahead there, and a house stands on the edge of the bank."

They were soon in close proximity to the light, and the head of the boat was slightly turned to keep in the channel. As they came nearly opposite to it the light itself became suddenly movable, and bore swiftly down toward them. The captain sprang to the side.

"Hold your horses, there!" he cried, excitedly. "Do you want to run me down?"

There was a sudden bustle heard in the direction of the light, but at the same moment the bows of a large vessel became clearly visible in the faint light of their lamps.

Hasty effort was made on both sides to avoid the approaching collision, but too late. The steamer was struck heavily near her stern, and with a fearful crash of breaking timbers she reeled and quivered as if about to burst into fragments.

Her burly antagonist the next instant passed by unscathed, a medley of incoherent voices rising from her deck.

"My eyes, if we ain't out down to the keel!" cried the captain, "and the whole river's pouring in. Alive there, men, she'll be at the bottom in two minutes. Get the boat down."

Corbin, meanwhile, had rushed to Graham's berth, and pulled him fiercely from his bed.

"Hurry, man. Jump into your clothes. The steamer's sinking."

But Harry was still half-asleep, and lost precious seconds in dressing. When they came on deck, the boat, with all else on board, had cut loose and was already lost in the darkness.

"Blast their eyes!" cried Corbin. "We'll have to swim for it. The shore can't be far off."

"I can't swim a stroke," said Harry.

"You've got to go ashore with me, anyhow," cried the other, repressing an instant temptation to avail himself of so good an opportunity to keep his murderous promise to Passmore. "I might let him drown now, and nobody be the wiser," he muttered. "But I won't; that's settled."

Flinging a large piece of wood that lay on deck overboard, he bade Harry spring over with him, directing him to take one end of the plank while he grasped the other.

Just as Harry was grasping for the plank in obedience to this direction, the vessel suddenly reeled and sunk, driving the plank ten feet away by the sudden impulse, and drawing all nearer things into the vortex.

After the momentary whirl and blinding dash of waters had slightly subsided, Corbin, firmly grasping his end of the plank, called to Harry.

"Got a tight hold there?"

There was no answer.

He reached out in sudden dread. The other end of the short plank was untenanted. With an unusual sinking of the heart, he called out loudly, but without response. Desperately letting go his life-preserver, he swam back into the dark circle lately tenanted by the steamer, and with fierce strokes searched the water in all directions, but without result. His companion, to all appearance, had sunk to the bottom. No trace of his presence was to be found.

Finally, as his own strength began to fail, he was obliged to strike out for the shore, sick at heart at the loss of the man whom he had engaged to murder.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ An editor in the upper end of this State says: "We expend $500,000,000 yearly for liquor for drinking." We don't see any use in a man drinking so much if he is an editor. We wouldn't have face enough to come out and say it anyhow.

☞ Georgia has a hale and hearty citizen who has been struck by thirty-two minie balls, one mortar shell, one shrapnel, one three-inch conical, struck by lightning, bitten by a rattlesnake, and chased by a mad dog.

☞ An Indiana man took a friend home to tea the other evening, without giving his wife notice. That night she talked herself into a paralysis of the tongue. Now all the men in the neighborhood are sending for friends and taking them home at all hours, but the women are too sharp, and retain a most dogged silence.

THEIR WAITING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

I.

In the pleasantest chamber of an old chateau, whose tall, grim towers looked, like gray-clothed sentinels, down on the blue waters of the river Loire, Madame la Marquise de Velvour lay dying.

Time and trouble had obliterated nearly all traces of her youthful beauty, but now, with her blue-veined, transparent skin tinted with a hectic flush, and her azure eyes glowing with the light of fever, she appeared lovelier than she had ever been; but her loveliness made one think of death—it was the beauty of sunset.

A priest knelt in the room, reciting the solemn prayers for the dying; at the foot of the bed stood Armand de Velvour, his face hidden in his hands, making the responses in a voice choked by sobs.

His mother, who had lain perfectly still for a time, suddenly revived.

"Armand!" she said.

The young man hastened to her side, and bent his ear close to her lips.

"Armand," said the dying woman, her tone growing excessively fine and clear, "you must make me a promise before I leave you. Say to me that you will drop your ancestral name, and that you will retire to an obscure place in Brittany, there to remain until you shall receive notice of your Uncle Antoine's death. He is not young; he may not live long, but, even if it be years, promise that you will wait, my son. Promise!"

Armand hesitated, as much from astonishment as from any other feeling.

"Speak! Oh, Armand, this silence tortures me! Promise that you will depart from hence, and live with my old steward, Francois, in the village of St. Michel, not as the Marquis de Velvour, but as one of the common people."

In the eyes of his mother the fading gleams of life were flickering. Those eyes were raised in anxiety to his face. Her weak tones rose into a wail as she again spoke.

"Armand, *he* is a terrible man. I thought him far away in a foreign land until yesterday—I am dying. Promise!"

Was this a time to reason and ask questions? Armand said,—

"I promise to act as you desire!"

An expression of peace stole over Madame de Velvour's face. The fever flush died away. Her lips moved in prayer, and, ere the old clock had ticked three more times, her soul left the earth.

After his mother's funeral Armand started at once for St. Michel. During Madame de Velvour's long illness she had settled up her affairs in preparation for death, so that there were no business arrangements to detain her son at the chateau.

Armand's grief was deep and sincere, but at twenty-two, grief is never hopeless. He was very desirous of seeing Francois, in the hope that this former servant of the house of Velvour would be able to throw some light on the subject of the promise.

Reaching St. Michel, a little village situated among the sands of the Breton coast, he had no difficulty in finding Francois. Indeed the old man expected him. Some days before Francois had received an unsteadily-written letter from his beloved mistress, Armand's mother. The note ran thus:

FRANCOIS—I can trust you. The time for proving your devotion to my family has come. Antoine de Velvour is again in France. I send Armand to you. Let him notify M. Lescure, my lawyer, who resides in Paris, that he is in your village. Pray for me now and hereafter.

MARGUERITE DE VELVOUR.

The tears filled the eyes of old Francois as he showed Armand the note.

"And only to think, Monsieur Armand, that I, who was an old man when Madame la Marquise came to the chatean a rosy-cheeked demoiselle—that I should live to read words written by her dying hand—that I should live to say *requiescat in pace* for her soul. Strange!—how strange!"

"Can you tell me, Francois," asked Armand, "why my mother made me promise to remain here? And why should she fear my Uncle Antoine, of whom my father or she but seldom spoke?"

"I will answer you. Antoine de Velvour proposed first for your mother's hand. Her parents were well enough pleased, and they arranged the match while Mademoiselle was in the convent getting her education. But it turned out that Mademoiselle had a will of her own. When she came out of the convent, she neglected Antoine, and soon after married his brother, Monsieur Armand, your father. Antoine de Velvour has never forgiven the slight.

"His desire for revenge seems to have grown into a monomania. Several times he attempted to assassinate your father, and after the Marquis's death your mother received one or two threatening letters from Antoine. Your mother knew no peace while he was in France. She feared for you. If you were to die, Antoine would be Marquis de Velvour, and possessed of the estate. He is known to be ambitious and unscrupulous. Had not your mother reason for apprehension?"

"But, Francois," cried Armand, "why this promise? Surely my mother might have trusted me to take care of myself, in spite of twenty such men as my Uncle Antoine!"

The old man turned away to hide a smile.

"She was a woman, you know, Monsieur Armand. She trusted you, but her fear was greater than her trust. Can you blame her, knowing that the fear arose from love?"

Armand was silent for a moment. "But Antoine de Velvour may live for twenty years. Imagine it!—I will have to remain in this obscure place the best part of my life, and never once see the city of my dreams—the mistress of art, of music, of all that makes life pleasant—beautiful Paris!"

Francois gravely shook his head. "Paris can offer roses, and also thorns—thorns that have pierced many a soul to death."

II.

It was a pretty sight. The fiery glow of sunset relieved the sombre gray of the evening clouds, although the king of day himself had been long out of view. But the young fisherman, who stood just behind a rock near old Pierre Patoulard's cottage, was not thinking of the sunset nor the clouds. Not at all. His thoughts and eyes were fixed on Thérese Patoulard. Thérese sat at the cottage door, her whole attention bent on the sea and the sands before her. She was not aware that a handsome young man was standing so near, never moving his eyes from her sweet, gentle face. She was thinking only of her father—old Pierre—who would have to cross the sands to reach home, and the tide was coming in.

There was a look of trouble and anxiety in her soft, brown eyes, which were now turned toward the stone cross, the top of which barely appeared above the rising sea.

"I can scarcely see it! He is lost!" she said, piteously, clasping her hands.

The young man behind the rock—it was Armand de Velvour who had adopted the peasant dress—hesitated an instant, and then came forward.

"May I ask the cause of Ma'amselle's distress?"

She looked up in surprise, and then answered—

"My father is crossing the sands. Look! You can see him from here, and the tide is advancing. The cross has nearly disappeared."

"Don't alarm yourself, Ma'amselle. He has accomplished three-quarters of the distance, and the top of the cross is still visible."

When the cross should disappear, Pierre Patoulard's case would be hopeless, for then the tide would flow in with such velocity as to outstrip the swiftest horse.

"If he but hastens his pace," continued Armand, "he will reach us in good time."

"But he cannot hasten," cried Thérese, wringing her hands. "He is old. I will go to him, and drag him safely hither or die with him!" She rushed forward.

Armand sprang after and detained her. "This is foolishness, Mademoiselle. You would both perish. *I* will go and save him."

Before she could answer him, he was making for the sands.

Thérese sank on her knees, and gazed breathlessly at the advancing sea. Each of her thoughts was a prayer. Armand reached her father. She saw him seize the old man by one arm, and speed toward her. With straining eyes she watched the progress of the two. Give but a moment, and they would be safe. She looked for the cross. The waters had hidden it! A wild shriek rang out, and Thérese fell to the ground, pale and senseless.

When consciousness returned, she saw Armand standing near, with a wine-flask in his hand which he had been holding to her lips. Her father was supporting her in his arms. A rosy flush of joy overspread her face as she saw them.

"We were just in time," said Armand, smiling gayly, "Two pair of feet are better than one, you see, Ma'amselle."

"I can say nothing but that you have saved my life, Monsieur," broke in old Pierre. "May I ask your name?"

"Armand Philippe. I am living with old Francois down yonder."

Patoulard was evidently surprised. From the young man's appearance and accent, he had taken him to be above the station his dress proclaimed.

Armand bowed to the father and daughter, and walked in the direction of Francois' cottage, not, however, before receiving a grateful look from Thérese which in his estimation well repaid him for the trouble he had taken.

After this, Armand became a frequent visitor at Patoulard's abode, and after awhile Thérese smiled more brightly in the evenings when he made his appearance. Francois looked on these visits in silent disapproval, but Pierre Patoulard was well satisfied.

"Armand will make a good husband," said Pierre to himself. "He's an industrious boy, and Thérese will not be a beggar. Francois has money laid by, and he won't be niggardly to the boy who calls him uncle."

So things went on; love is not only blind himself, but he blinds those whom he wounds. Armand and Thérese were deeply in love ere they knew it themselves. One evening after the day's labor was done, Thérese sat at the cottage door, while the soft murmur of the sea came up through the moon-lit air; but sweeter to her than the sound of the sea were the words that Armand whispered to her. And the modest blush, the low *yes*, with which she answered them, would be cheaply bought by the sacrifice of a lifetime, Armand thought, and both were happy.

The next day Armand received a letter from Paris. It was from M. Lescure. This was the substance of it:—

"M. Antoine de Velvour has been making inquiries about you. He may, by this time, have discovered your whereabouts. This is intended to place you on your guard."

For a week after this, nothing particular occurred. Armand and Francois were on the watch.

About a fortnight after, several sailors, who could not speak the Breton patois, made their appearance in St. Michel. On the evening of that day Armand came to the Patoulard cottage, and as usual remained till about nine o'clock. Then Pierre Patoulard accompanied him to the door, and fastened it after him. Shortly afterward the sounds of a scuffle, followed by a groan, startled Thérese. Her father, being rather deaf, did not hear this, and would not consent to re-open the door.

On the following morning it was found that Armand was missing, and so was a ship which had been anchored all the preceding day as near land as the depth of water would permit. Old Francois was frantic with grief.

* * * * * * *

Time wore on. The fact came out that young Armand had not been a simple fisherman, but the Marquis de Velvour. And the neighbors shook their heads, saying, "He deceived Thérese. He trifled with her, and now he has gone away to marry another."

But Thérese did not mind this. She waited.

"There are more fish in the sea," said old Pierre, "and you're the prettiest girl in St. Michel, Thérese."

But Thérese did not mind this either. Two years passed, and she still waited. The roses were going from her cheeks, the arch smiles from her lips, and the brightness from her eyes. Thérese, who still sat at the door spinning flax, was no longer the prettiest girl in St. Michel; but waiting is very hard.

Francois died, old Pierre died, and Thérese lived all alone. It was rumored that the Marquis de Velvour was dead, too; this was Antoine who had assumed the title, but Thérese did not know it. She thought it was Armand.

"I will wait still," said Thérese, "for what is the truest life but waiting—for Heaven?"

Although by this time gray hairs had begun to appear among her brown tresses, more than one man in St. Michel would have been proud to call her "wife;" but she was true to the memory of her lost love.

III.

It was a fearful night. The storm spirits held high carnival on sea and land.

When daylight came, broken spars, pieces of shattered timber, and human beings, dead or dying, strewed the beach. Thérese went down to the sands with the rest of the St. Michel people.

After the injured and the dead had been removed to the village, Thérese wandered a little apart from the others. Lying half-covered by sand she found a man. Whether he was dead or alive, she could not at first tell. She approached nearer. She saw the man's eyelids flutter. There was life in him then. She stooped to feel his pulse, and with a suppressed scream started back, exclaiming,

"Armand!"

The man opened his eyes. He looked up into her face, but did not recognize her. A sharp pang shot through her heart. Was she indeed so changed? Had ten years made her old? She said again—

"Armand!"

A light seemed to flash over the man's face.

"Thérese—*my* Thérese!"

Wild with joy, she ran to the village for assistance.

For days Armand de Velvour lay in the little cottage, lingering on the verge of death; but Thérese was unwearied in her attentions to the sick man, and the village people were very kind; and, though Armand's injuries were by no means slight, within the month after the wreck, he was able to sit beside Thérese at the cottage-door, breathing the fresh sea air, and telling her what had befallen him since their parting ten years ago.

On that night he had gone but a short distance from Pierre's house, when three men, who had doubtless been hiding behind the cottage, rushed upon him. One of them struck him a blow on the head with the hilt of a knife. In spite of his struggles, they gagged him, and dragged him toward the sea. They threw him from a tall rock. He felt the cold waves splash around him in the darkness. One of the men cried out,

"Farewell, Marquis!" and then he sank. When he rose again, he saw a light shining in the distance. Fortunately, he was a skilful swimmer, and the descent from the rock had only stunned him for an instant. He struck out vigorously for the light. Getting nearer, he saw the black hull of a vessel looming before him. He was getting exhausted. He exerted all his strength to cry out. Some sailors heard him, and put off in a boat to his assistance.

He had been saved from a watery grave—but a worse fate awaited him. The Argos was short of hands, so the captain refused to let him land, and he was forced to make one of the crew when the vessel started on her voyage the next morning. The Argos was wrecked off the coast of Africa. There was only one life-boat. Some of the crew seized this in the first moment of danger, leaving the rest to their fate. These latter attempted to swim ashore. Armand alone reached land, and was the first white man who ever touched the spot.

The place was beautiful. A deep blue African sky stretched over myriads of exquisite animal and vegetable forms; a few harmless natives had huts on this spot. They were hospitable and gentle, and here Armand de Velvour dwelt for nearly ten years.

Oh, the weariness of watching each day for the expected vessel, and the weary weight of sadness that oppressed him as he went to rest without having seen it! Yet each day brought new hope; and he waited. At last an ivory trader anchored off the coast. Armand was taken on board, and rapture almost burst his heart when the African coast seemed but a dim blue line. He was bound for home!—for Thérese! Doubts and fears filled his mind as France drew nearer. Had Thérese been constant? This question was answered when he was thrown on the sands at St. Michel.

"So my Uncle Antoine is dead? Well, I forgive him. But our waiting is over now, Thérese."

"At last."

A short time after, Thérese Patoulard became the Marquise de Velvour.

A SLIP IN MID-AIR.

A TRUE STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY HELEN HARCOURT.

It has been many a long year since then, yet I remember it all, just as though it had occurred but yesterday.

I was a carpenter, the foreman of a large establishment, and as such possessed the entire confidence of my employer, who, by the way, had been a schoolmate of mine.

One day he called me into his office to look at some rare coins he had just purchased.

"Here," said he, placing in my hand a heavy gold piece, "is one that is worth more than all the rest together. It is a great curiosity. I paid two hundred dollars for it, and consider it cheap at that. I could easily double my money by selling it; so you see, Harvey, it is really a good investment."

"No doubt it is," said I, "though it seems a large sum to have lying idle."

I breathed an involuntary sigh as I laid the coin down on the desk, for two hundred dollars would have seemed a fortune to me just then.

The severe illness of my wife, and one of our children, and the death of another, had made serious inroads on my purse, and it required the exercise of the utmost economy to keep myself free from debt; nay, I had even been obliged to draw from the bank the small sum which, besides my salary, was all I possessed of worldly treasures. Thinking of this, I laid the coin down with a sigh, and turned away to attend to my duties.

The next morning I was again summoned into the office, but this time I met with no friendly greeting, as usual.

"Harvey," said my employer, abruptly, "that coin we were looking at *has disappeared*. I have made a thorough search, but it is not to be found. It must have been carried away by *some* one. You alone saw or knew of it, and—"

He paused, and looked significantly into my face. I finished the sentence for him, the hot blood dyeing cheeks and brow as I spoke.

"You mean that therefore *I* took it! *I!*"

"What else can I think? The coin was here; you alone saw it. I cannot recall having seen it since it was in your hands. You are in need of money—you have told me that yourself. It was a great temptation, and I forgive you because of our old friendship, but I cannot retain you in my employ. Here is the salary due you."

"Very well," said I, with forced calmness, "so be it. Since you have so poor an opinion of me after years of faithful service, I shall not stoop to defend myself."

Then I took up the money he had laid upon the desk, and went out from his presence a well-nigh broken-hearted man.

But for the tender love of my wife, I doubt not I should have buried my sorrows in the grave of a suicide.

Supported by that love, however, and the consciousness of my own innocence, I took fresh courage, and set resolutely to work to find another employer.

But powerful is the breath of slander; turn which way I might, I ever found that the story of my dismissal for theft had preceded me, and my applications for employment uniformly met with refusal.

Time went on; my small stock of money was exhausted; piece by piece, our furniture and every spare article of clothing, found its way to the pawnbroker, until, at length, even this poor resource failed us, and my children cried in vain for food.

Yet I did not sit down in idle despair; I could not *afford* to do so; the life or death of all I loved on earth, depended on my exertions—and so, turning away from them with a heavy heart, I once more set out on the weary search for work.

All in vain! refusal after refusal met my entreaties for employment; and I was turning homeward with a listless step, when, passing an immense church, I was attracted by a group of men gathered at its base.

Impelled by some strange impulse, I approached and mingled with them.

A workman was standing near by, looking up at the great steeple which towered aloft some two hundred and twenty feet above him, while a gentleman, evidently an architect, was addressing him in earnest language, and at the same time pointing toward the golden cross at the summit of the spire.

"I tell you," he exclaimed, as I drew near, "it must, and can be done. The cross *must* be taken down, or the first heavy gale will send it down into the street, and lives will be lost. Coward! is this the way you back out of a job after engaging to do it?"

"I didn't know the spire was so high," answered the man, sullenly. "I ain't goin' to risk my life goin' up there. Do it yourself, if you want it done!"

"I would if I were able," said the architect. "But go, if you will; let it be! My honor is pledged to have it done at any price—and I can find a braver man than you to do it."

The carpenter walked away, with a dogged, slouching step, and the gentleman was about to move away also, when I stepped forward.

"What is it you want done, sir?" I asked; "I am a carpenter, perhaps I can do it."

He turned eagerly toward me.

"I will make it worth your while. Take down that cross, and I will pay you a hundred dollars. You will have to ascend by those ornamental blocks; and I tell you, candidly, they are not to be depended on; they must be weak and rotten—for they have been there for years."

I looked up at the spire; it was square at the base, and tapered to a sharp point, while along each angle were nailed small gilded blocks of wood.

"It is a dangerous piece of work," said I, "and there will be even more peril in descending than in ascending. Suppose I succeed in removing the cross, and then—"

"If any accident happens to you, my brave fellow, the money shall be paid to your family. I promise you that. Give me your address."

"Here it is," said I, "and as you value your soul keep your word with me. My wife and children are starving, or I would not attempt this work. If I die they can live on the hundred dollars for awhile until my sick wife recovers her strength."

"I'll make it a hundred and fifty!" exclaimed the architect, "and may God protect you! If I had the skill necessary to ascend that steeple I would ask no man to risk his life there. But come, and keep a steady hand and eye."

I followed him into the church, then up into the spire, until we paused before a narrow window. This was the point from which I must start on the perilous feat I had undertaken.

Casting a single glance at the people in the street below—mere specks in the distance—I reached out from the window, and grasping one of the ornamental blocks, swung myself out upon the spire.

There I paused a moment, and looked up at the dangerous space I was about to traverse—at the long line of blocks reaching up the steep sides of the steeple to the glittering cross far above me.

For an instant my courage faltered, but the remembrance of my starving family came to my aid, and with a silent prayer for protection and success, I placed my hands on the next block above me and clambered up.

From block to block I went, steadily and cautiously, trying each one ere I trusted my weight upon it.

Two-thirds of the space had been safely passed, when suddenly the block that supported me moved—gave way!

Oh, Heavens! never, though I should live to see an hundred years, shall I cease to shudder at the recollection of that terrible moment.

Yet even in the midst of my agony, as I felt myself slipping backward, I did not for one second lose my presence of mind.

It seemed to me that never before had my senses been so preternaturally acute as then, when a horrible death seemed inevitable.

Down, down I slipped, grasping at each block as I passed it by, until at length my fearful course was arrested, and then, while my head reeled with the sudden reaction, a great shout went up from the people below.

"Come down, come down," called the architect from the window; "half the sum shall be yours for the risk you have run. Don't try again! Come down."

But no! more than ever now was I determined to succeed. I was not one to give up, after having undertaken a difficult task.

Coolly, but cautiously, I commenced the ascent once more, first seeking in vain to reach across to the next line of blocks, for I did not care to trust myself again to that which had proved so treacherous.

This I was compelled to do, however, until the space between the angles became sufficiently small to allow me to swing across.

Accomplishing my purpose at length, I went up more rapidly, carefully testing each block as I proceeded.

Ere long I reached the cross, and there I paused to rest, looking down from the dizzy height with a coolness that, even then, astonished me.

A few strokes of the light hatchet that the architect had slung at my back, and piece by piece, the rotten cross fell to the ground.

My work was done, and as the last fragment disappeared, I found a sad pleasure in the thought that should I never reach the ground alive, my dear ones would not be left entirely penniless; they would have ample means to supply their wants until my wife could obtain employment.

Steadily and cautiously I lowered myself from block to block, and at length reached the spire window, amidst the cheers of those assembled in the street.

Inside the steeple the architect placed a roll of bank-notes in my hand.

"You have well earned the money," he said. "It does me good to see a man with so much nerve—but—bless me! what is the matter with your hair? It was black before you made the ascent, now it is *gray!*"

And so it was! That moment of intense agony, while slipping helplessly downward, had blanched my hair until it appeared like that of an old man. The work of years had been done in an instant!

Entering the bare, cheerless room which was now all I called my home, I found a visitor awaiting me, my late employer.

"Harvey," said he, extending his hand, "I have done you a great wrong. It cost me a terrible pang to believe in your guilt, but circumstances were so strongly against you, that I was forced to believe. I have found the coin, Harvey, it slipped under the secret drawer in my desk. Can you forgive me, dear old friend?"

My heart was too full to speak; I silently pressed his hand.

"I will undo the wrong I have done," he went on. "All the world shall know that I accused you unjustly, not through my words only, but through my actions too. You must be my partner, Harvey. If you refuse I shall feel that you have not forgiven me."

I did not refuse.

Instead, I thankfully accepted the offer which my old friend so generously made, knowing that no surer method could have been devised to silence forever the tongue of slander, and free my name from the unmerited reproach which had of late rested upon it.

Uninterrupted prosperity has attended my steps ever since that eventful day, but neither prosperity nor wealth can efface its memory from my heart, nor restore my whitened locks to their once raven hue.

AMERICAN FARMERS.

Scribner says: "We hazard the assertion that no class of equal average means lives so well as American farmers. One of these possessing a farm and buildings worth say ten thousand dollars, will gather about him and enjoy more real comfort than could be obtained from the income of a hundred thousand dollars in New York. He may live in a more commodious dwelling than a metropolitan citizen having ten thousand dollars annual income. He may have his carriage and horses. His table may be supplied with everything fresh in its season. His labor is less wearing than the toil of counting-rooms and offices, and he has more leisure.

☞ Since ladies have taken to wearing newspapers for bustles, publishers complain that their fair subscribers are more in "arrears" than ever.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

[Any of the following works—or any other book—will be forwarded by mail by the proprietors of THE POST on receipt of the regular retail price. *Address H. Peterson & Co., 319 Walnut St., Philadelphia.*

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OLIVER OPTIC'S MAGAZINE for October. Published by LEE & SHEPARD, Boston.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Close of the "heated term"—Linen clothes.

☞ Venice employs over 4000 gondolas.

☞ A fellow who sees a girl home under an umbrella is certainly a rain bow.

☞ A Western editor has come to the conclusion that the young ladies in his village are not at all like St. Paul, because they pay so much attention to "things which are behind."

☞ A servant transformed a quiet home into a Babel and lost a good place by merely straining four quarts of crab-apple jelly through an eighteen dollar veil.

☞ When Autumn marries Winter, the wedding cakes are frosted.

☞ Here is a St. Joe new advertisement: "If you want a hoop skirt, go to the ant, thou sluggard, and B. Weiz."

☞ Two female barbers in Brussels show woman's efforts to razor self to independence.

☞ A Wilmington (Delaware) paper announces that a gentleman in that city, 96 years old, who within the past year or two has proposed marriage to over fifty ladies, has been advised by the Mayor to take a rest.

☞ A Cincinnati youth, guided by the advice of a fortune-teller, sought to make a girl love him by means of electricity working from under her chair. When the time came she sprang into the air about three feet, and when she came down she landed in her lover's hair and took about two handfuls therefrom, and then told him that she hated him. No match.

☞ According to the Danbury News, a young man of that town has just made the discovery that he married a left-handed woman. All his buttons are sewed on the wrong side. He manages to get along as far as the rest of the garments are concerned, but when he dons a clean shirt he has to lie down on his back and lash his right hand to the bed-post. He is afraid he will have to use shoe-strings.

☞ Don Piatt, who is banqueting on fricasseed "caw caw," says the best way to enjoy "crow" is to contemplate buzzard.

☞ An exchange says:—"The railway company of the Ouest of France has obtained a number of carriages for the use of passengers built upon the American principle." We would hardly suppose that the company would have enough passengers built on the American principle to justify such an expense as that.

☞ Brigham Young is said to have a disorder of his heart. No wonder, considering the number of times he has given it to different ladies.

☞ A clever Westerner lately committed suicide by seating himself in his easy chair, with his dressing-gown and slippers on, and taking in the contents of the gas-pipe through a rubber tube.

☞ Stanley was once in love with an Omaha actress, and the Omaha Despatch elegantly remarks thereon that the lady, Annie Ward, "might have went further and fared worse." She couldn't have gone much further than Ujiji.

☞ We are sorry to learn that a woman in Harrisburg broke her arm the other day while spanking her boy. This is another of the many outrages which grow out of the inability of women to obtain their rights. When Mrs. Woodhull gets into office there will either be some kind of a new India rubber boy invented, so that women can spank them with the assistance of elasticity, or boys will all be compelled by law to spank themselves. It will be a great day for the women of this country when Woodhull enters the White House.

☞ VERY RUDE OF HIM.—Haughty bar beauty—"Any lemon, sir?" Hard-hearted ruffian—"No, thanks; you've looked in the glass—that's enough."

☞ A Vermont engineer on a locomotive recently saved the life of a little child at the risk of his own. The father, worth $75,000, asked the courageous man to take a glass of soda, as a reward for saving his little one. This little incident shows that the human breast is not entirely devoid of generosity and things. The noble engineer, however, refused the glass of soda, saying he didn't want to beggar the father.

☞ A Danbury lady's bustle was sadly damaged by water standing in it from the rain Sunday night.

☞ Monsieur de Paris—that is to say, the headsman of Paris—is a fine-looking man, who always dresses in faultless broadcloth on the scaffold. When his attendants fasten the poor wretch to the fatal board on the guillotine, he whispers to him in the suavest manner: "Courage, my friend, it will not hurt you much!"

☞ A St. John paper describes a youth as "seventeen feet high and seven years old or seventeen years old and seven feet high," it forgets which.

☞ A Japanese student in New Haven, sent a polite note to his professor, requesting permission to kill a student who had insulted him.

☞ The New York papers generally praise the good playing of the Philadelphia cricketers in the recent match at Germantown.

☞ The antiquity of balloon ascensions is considered as proven by the historical fact that Moses was constantly planning what Aaron ought to do.—*N. Y. World.*

☞ Billings says: "There ain't anny-thing that will kompletely kure lazyness—but I have known a second wife to hurry it sum."

A Universal Article of Faith.

In these days of religious contention it has been thought impossible to indicate an article of faith upon which *all* sects and classes were united. There is one, however, and a very notable one, too, viz.: a belief which is implicit and universal in the paramount efficacy of that matchless HOUSEHOLD TONIC AND RECUPERANT, PLANTATION BITTERS. The constantly increasing patronage which it receives, has, it is true, excited the petty envy of certain splenetic advertisers of pinchbeck panaceas, who hope to make a market for their own stagnant, watery wares, by decrying all spirituous medicinal preparations. But the public can stomach neither their arguments nor their potations, and consequently reject these very weak imitations of the enemy as entirely too thin!

☞ A new and profitable branch of business is invented in Georgia, by a genius who sprinkles salt on the railroad to allure the cattle upon the track. The animals are killed by the trains, and the railroad companies have to pay for them.

☞ A house in Michigan was recently struck by lightning and consumed, together with $2,500 in greenbacks. This shows the folly of owning greenbacks.

Success Based Upon Merit.

It is a subject of general remark, among both wholesale and retail druggists, that no medicine introduced to the American public has ever gained such a popularity and met with so large a sale in all parts of the land, in the same length of time, as has Dr. PIERCE'S GOLDEN MEDICAL DISCOVERY. This cannot depend upon its having been more largely advertised than any other medicine, as such is not the case. The correct explanation, we think, is found in the fact that this medicine produces the most wonderful and perfect cures of very bad cases of bronchial, throat and lung diseases, is undoubtedly the most perfect and efficient remedy for all kinds of Coughs that has ever been introduced to the public, and at the same time possesses the greatest of blood purifying and strengthening properties that medical science has been able to produce, thus rendering it a sovereign remedy not only in the cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Hoarseness, and Coughs, but also for all diseases of the liver and blood, as scrofulous diseases, skin diseases, blotches, rough skin, pimples, black specks and discolorations. It has therefore a wide range of application and usefulness, and it not only gives the most perfect satisfaction to all who use it, but far exceeds the expectations of the most sanguine, thus eliciting the loudest praise and making permanent *Home* advertising mediums of all who use it. For these reasons it is that there is not perhaps a druggist in all the vast domain of this continent, who tries to please his customers and supply their wants, that does not keep and sell large quantities of this most valuable medicine. 590

PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

REDUCTION OF PRICE!

SPLENDID STORIES.

The publishers of THE LADY'S FRIEND have concluded to reduce its price to single subscribers from $2.50 to $2—the prices to Clubs (already very low) remaining the same.

They shall continue to obtain for their readers the very best novelets, stories, poetry, etc., that can be procured, including articles from the gifted pens of Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss A. L. Muzzey, Daisy Ventnor, August Bell, Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, A. M. Dana, Madge Carroll, Emma B. Ripley, Nora Perry, M. C. Pyle, Ida Rowland, etc., etc., etc.

The following novelets, with the usual variety of short stories, are announced for 1873:

WITHIN THE MAZE;

OR,

LADY ANDINNIAN'S TRIAL.

By MRS. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Dene Hollow," &c.

UNA AND HER LIONS.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming," etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By Mrs. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

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The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character. They embrace beautiful pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections, illustrations of our Novelets and Stories, illustrations of the Fashions, (including cuts from which patterns for almost everything can be ordered at a low price,) illustrations of Ladies' Fancy work, etc.

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A piece of the latest and most fashionable Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth the price of the magazine.

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SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, OCT. 5, 1872.

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If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

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JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT;

OR,

HELD IN THE HIDDEN ROOM.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA,

BY FRANK CARROLL.

The above is the title of an ably written novelet, which we begin in our present number. The scenes are laid mostly in and about Philadelphia, and the story will have an additional interest for all those who have ever visited the city, as the spots and thoroughfares mentioned in the narrative are generally those which really exist, and are not mere constructions of the author's brain For all our readers it will be a graphic picture of certain phases of city life. The commencement of this novelet will be an excellent time to begin new subscriptions, as just three months are left of the closing year.

LAUREL HILL.

In answer to a recent article in THE POST, relative to the management of North Laurel Hill, we have received a pamphlet containing the "Rules and Regulations," of which the following passages are marked for our notice:

"THE PERMANENT FUND.—A Permanent Fund made up of a certain portion of the purchase-money paid for each lot has been set aside by the Managers, the interest of which is to be applied forever to keep the Cemetery in repair.

"The sum already received amounts to about ninety-two thousand dollars, invested in bonds and mortgages of the first-class, on improved property in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania State loans, and loan of the city of Philadelphia, and it is increasing. These funds are held in trust by the Girard Life Insurance Annuity and Trust Company, of Philadelphia, one of our most substantial institutions, possessing a permanent charter. The interest is expended for the benefit of the Lotholders, either in permanent improvement or daily care. In addition to this invested fund, the Managers have property in the neighborhood of the Cemetery, intended for a like purpose, and they believe that by judicious management this real estate will yield an income equal to that now received from the Permanent Fund.

"FUTURE CARE.—Lots and Monuments will not take care of themselves. Frost, the weather, and the growth of trees, shrubs, briers, and weeds, in time, all tend to disfigure the grounds and to weaken and deface tombs, headstones, and enclosures. The Managers believe that many Lotholders would gladly insure their grounds and improvements against effacing and destroying influences. To such Lotholders they suggest the propriety of making provision by will or deed, for the preservation of monuments, enclosures and grounds. This can be done by depositing or bequeathing in trust to the Cemetery Company a sum such that the interest thereof applied from time to time shall be sufficient for the purpose. Money so deposited will constitute a separate and sacred fund, invested in like manner with the Permanent Fund of the Cemetery, and its income will be expressly devoted and applied to the special object designated by the proprietor."

According to the above, the sum already invested as a "Permanent Fund" amounts to about $92,000; the yearly interest of which, at six per cent., must be about $5,520. What portion of this sum has been received from the lotholders of North Laurel Hill, or whether the amounts received from the different Cemeteries are kept separate, is not stated. We suppose, however, that they are put into one common Fund, and the interest applied without regard to locality. And while this may be unobjectionable so far as North, Central and South Laurel Hills are concerned, of course it would not be so if the Managers were to go on, and include West Laurel Hill in the arrangement—a thing, of course, which we take it for granted they have not the least intention of doing.

A deed now before us, held by a lotholder of North Laurel Hill—and we suppose all the deeds are in this respect the same—says:

"And it is hereby agreed that a certain part of the consideration" (one-tenth in this case) "shall be set apart so as to form with other sums derived in like manner, a separate fund, the interest whereof shall be applied under the direction of the Company aforesaid, *to the preservation of the said Cemetery and its appurtenances in good order, AND to the support of the buildings, general enclosures, roads, walks and grounds, belonging to the same.*"

What is the purport of the above clause in the deeds? We always supposed that it included the care of the lots, the cutting of the grass, attention to the shrubbery, and the preservation of the monuments. For what does the phrase, "the preservation of said Cemetery and its appurtenances in good order," mean, if it does not mean this?

Would a Cemetery be considered in good order, with the grass growing wildly over all the tombstones—and which grass was never cut, save when it had arrived at such a height as made it profitable to sell for hay? Or, would it be in good order, with the lots full of briers and weeds?

And yet it seems to be a fair inference from the second passage we have quoted, relative to "Future Care," that the Managers consider either that the taking care of the lots and monuments is not a part of their duty, or else fear that the interest of "The Permanent Fund" will not be sufficient to keep the Cemeteries in good order.

When the writer of this article purchased a lot in North Laurel Hill, before the existence of the South and Central Cemeteries, he supposed that he had covenanted with the Company that they should keep the lot where the forms of his children were laid, "in good order," for long centuries after he himself had been placed beside them. Hundreds of others probably have thought the same thing. We would like to know—they doubtless would like to know—whether or not in this supposition we all have been mistaken—and whether, unless we deposit or bequeath certain other sums, our lots and mounds and monumental stones will all go to rack and ruin, when no hand of relative or friend remains to perform the last pious offices of affection or remembrance.

We do not think that in asking, in a kindly spirit, a public answer from the Managers to the questions of what they understand their duty to be respecting the care of the lots, and whether the "Permanent Fund" is sufficient to enable them to fulfil it, we are doing more than what it is perfectly proper to do, while we feel sure that we shall be eliciting information that is greatly desired by a number of our fellow citizens.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

THE CINCINNATI EXPOSITION.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—Among the dozen things at this moment in my mind to spoil good white paper and printer's ink with, there isn't anything less stupid, I think, than some more talk about this wonderful triumphal arch of civilization called the Cincinnati Exposition. I've been lately reading about the Prehistoric Man of the Drift Age, thousands of years before there is any record of him, when your and my ancestors, friend, lived in underground holes along with the cave-bear and the woolly-haired rhinoceros, much the same as Paddy shares his parlor with the pig, now-days,—when our ancestors were small folks with monkey heads and faces, and didn't have much clothes on, and in the whole three departments of art, science and manufactures, they hadn't an earthly thing to show for themselves except a few very surpassingly awkward-looking stone hammers and hatchets. I say I look at our Exposition and then I think of the Prehistoric Man, and those good old times when our first families all rooted in the dirt together, and then I tickle myself with the thought that the world has moved immensely, hasn't it? and then I tickle myself still further with the thought that if the world keeps on moving as it has done, maybe in the course of four or five million years more there won't be any more Congress, or sewing machine agents. Happy thought! It makes me feel better all day.

To begin where I left off. If you will kindly remember, I told you about Hiawatha's silver canoe. Well, it was very beautiful, as I said, but if you'll believe me, I never for a moment imagined that there was any use in the thing, or that it was intended to be of service in any way. I went to the Exposition again, yesterday, and naturally went around to take a second look at my silver beauty. I looked, and behold, a card was fastened to a corner of the silver lake, and thereon was inscribed "Hiawatha Fruit Basket and Cake Stand," or something of that sort. That is to say, you lay slices of cake around upon the bosom of the silver lake, and you fill Hiawatha's canoe up with apples and things. That is the design of it, as I saw by the card, though I couldn't have told before, if I'd had my head chopped off, that there was any design to it. But I've done my duty by you, and told you, so you would know.

I spent some hours looking at pictures, yesterday. Now, I abominate pictures, and that sort of thing, as a rule. There are other things I'd rather look at, most any day. It's my private opinion that I've inherited, carried down through so many thousand years that it makes me dizzy to think about it, some of the mental traits of that uncouth beast, the Prehistoric Man. Because I know that a splash of mud against the side of a house is just as pretty to me as ninety-nine hundredths of all the pictures I ever saw. In this happy frame of mind I went to Art Hall yesterday. The exhibition of sculpture is in the vestibule of Art Hall. If there is anything I dislike more than pictures, it's sculpture. I account for this dislike in the same way as the other, mental traits inherited from that uncouth beast, the Prehistoric Man. And I thought yesterday, gazing profoundly upon these ugly works of art done in marble,—what a pity these fine folks who spend their lives "sculping" things, have spoiled such numbers of nice tombstones. It's a sin to waste things so. And if upon the whole earth you can find me anything uglier or more hideous than some of those "sculps" in Art Hall, you can take my new hat, that's all.

At the entrance of Art Hall, I heard a voice of a woman say:

"Aint them magnificent?"

The voice proceeded from a tall woman, wearing a green hat, and a row of false teeth big enough to fill the mouth of a horse. I looked in the direction the voice indicated, and saw a picture. The name thereof was "In the Glow." I should say so! A little girl sat upon a rock, watching what was supposed to be the sunset. In the glow? I guess so. I saw such a "glow" as that once in my life, but it was the glow made by a tremendous hay-barn, which caught fire one exceedingly dark night, and burnt up like a flash, before you could say Jack Robinson. Then I've a ridiculous picture, too, which I keep pasted up in the back of a certain man's writing-desk, to make him good, which has a "glow" exactly like our artist's sunset. It is a picture of a very bad place, and a very wicked personage pitching some bad people into a very hot fire with a pitchfork. I tell you the bad people are howling! In the Glow! Blazes! If that was the sort of a sunset of life which gave mystical lore to the old chap in the Fifth Reader, I don't wonder he prophesied bloody murder.

Then I went on. I saw a crowd of people gathered in front of one picture, mostly a crowd of working people, with honest, sensible faces, plain country people, and some old men and women. They did not speak or talk much, only stood gazing silently, without a thought of aught beyond that picture. It is a picture which, of all the pictures in the great Art Hall, the common people single out and stand and gaze upon. The common people are oftentimes clearer-headed art critics than their betters. The highest praise which can be given a painting is that it is a picture which the people stop to look at. No wonder they stopped to look at this picture in Art Hall. It was Lessing's great picture of the martyr Huss before the Council of Constance. You see it all before you there, in soft, rich real colors, the red-robed, red-hatted cardinals, the mitred bishops, with their fat, complacent, orthodox faces, and a little farther in the background some monks, with their fierce, eager eyes gleaming with hatred, hungry for the prey which they are already so sure of. In the centre stands the great Huss. I know not how to describe him. It seems to me that just so Jesus, the Christ, must have looked, in the presence of his accusers. The face is the face of an angel, not one of those imaginary beings whom some people think of as flapping their wings and flying around in the air overhead, but a real flesh and blood angel, who has wrestled with temptation and conquered, who has fought the good fight gloriously. The face is in strange contrast with the unctuous, well-fed countenances of the comfortable-sleeping, fat old monks about him—a thin, spiritual, unearthly face, fine, pure and nervous, gleaming with the pale fire of enthusiasm, glowing even now with the light of Heaven. No wonder the people love that picture. No wonder they come to look at it again, and gaze upon it through tears, and turn to give it a farewell glance as they go away. There is that in it which reaches out to the inner, spiritual life of every mortal creature, which touches a pure, sweet, holy chord in the human soul.

Much as I don't like pictures, I looked at this one till the vile whisky breath of the young chap beside me drove me off. Then I edged off up toward the other side, and lo, another young reprobate was there, scenting the whole air with *his* vile whisky breath. It made a body feel qualmish, I can tell you. I do wish that folks with bad teeth wouldn't smoke cheap segars, and drink chain lightning whisky, when they go into crowds. The whisky breaths were too many for me, so I went off and looked at the naked tallow boy and the tallow candles. While I was there, the same tall woman in a green hat, with the big, grinning row of false teeth, came and looked at the tallow candles too. And I heard her remark to her companion, as to the tallow candles, while we stood there—

"Aint them magnificent?"

I thought it was time to go. I went and looked at the grand pianos. A silly young woman was pounding away for dear life on one of them. And the same tall woman who wore a green hat and had a grinning row of false teeth came up while I was there, and stood at my elbow, and remarked to her companion—

"Aint them magnificent?"

In dismay I fled wildly to the Tennessee rattlesnake who shed his skin last night for the benefit of the Cincinnati Exposition. I was gazing upon his snakeship with a feeling of admiration not unmingled with awe, when behold, there came mewards the self-same tall female woman in a green hat, who wore a grinning row of false teeth. I clapped my hands to my unhappy ears, and fled in wild affright, lest this female woman in a green hat should gaze upon the Tennessee rattlesnake, and turn to her friend and say—

"Aint them magnificent!"

ZIG.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—After making my best bow to you, and indulging in a metaphorical handshake with your numerous readers, permit me to introduce at once a highly interesting and original topic, and congratulate you and everybody and myself too, on this late delightful change in the weather, and also to take a backward glance and exclaim all along with the rest of you, "What an *awful* summer!" (Emphasis on *awful*, every time.)

An old lady informed me yesterday that the intense heat we have been enduring, and which in some way seemed to her to be a sort of preparatory stage of what many people were likely to get hereafter, was not caused by Plantamour's comet that was advertised to collide with the earth this season, and only missed it by a few billion miles. She said they never got any such notions when she was young; and for her part she didn't believe the comet had any more to do with it than she had; it was hot because it was *hot*, and that she believed was the solution of the whole thing. I was greatly tempted to go into an astronomical and comet-ological explanation of things—but I was afraid if I convinced her against her will she would be of the same opinion still, so I just quietly nodded my head, and said, "It *was awful hot*." And then we tacked and took in a little sail and started off afresh.

She said she had understood there had been a greater degree of heat in the West than in New York—that, in fact, a friend of hers residing there, had seen the thermometer one hundred and eight in the shade at nine o'clock at night; she did not say what it probably would have been if they had hung it up in the sun at that hour, but I presume the mercury would have shot up through the top of the machine and gone off on a voyage of discovery for Livingstone, or the comet. And then something was said about cooling dews and the sweet scent of the cloverfield, and the honey-suckle, and mignonette, and the melancholy chirrup of the August cricket—and we grew dreadfully sentimental; and finally she asked me if I believed in "Spiritual impressions." I hadn't much of an idea what "Spiritual impressions" were, and as I could see no right, or reason in *disbelieving* what I knew nothing about, I unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative. She then said she was a psychometrical physicianess—and if I liked, she would relapse into the clairvoyant state and look me over, and if I had any insidious malady lurking in my supposed perfect organization, she would discover it, for a dollar, and if curable, would give me a spiritual prescription. I told her that would be useless, as I was strictly temperate, and belonged to the Father Matthew Society; but if, after she "relapsed," she would take a backward glance over my past life, and relate correctly some of the noted events, and then throw her eye over the future, so that I might know what was coming and get out of the way, I would be much obliged.

At this she settled herself into the easiest of easy chairs, and motioned me to a dreadfully stiff and uncomfortable one immediately in front of her. I expected to smell brimstone, and glanced around for supernatural accompaniments, while the physicianess proceeded to "relapse." I watched her closely, and I think I could do it myself now. It only consists in closing the eyes, moving the head from side to side, and taking an occasional long breath.

After a time she began to talk, and I began to ask questions, but she was, evidently, a Yankee, for she would answer every one by asking another, and, to save me, I couldn't get what the spiritualists call a "test."

There was a great deal of love and marriage—as though that was all a woman cared about—and the inevitable dark man and light man, and two marriages, the second much the happier of the two, and more serene and enjoyable from their having been a rehearsal in the form of a *first* marriage. But I could not find out when or where I was born, or whether I was ever born at all; whether I was married or single, or ever had been; childless, or the mother of twins.

She came pretty near informing me though to what trade or profession I belonged, for she guessed "dressmaking, millinery, in a store, keeping boarders, setting type, spotter on street cars"—everything, in fact, but scrubbing out offices, and scribbling for newspapers; and when, at last, I took pity on her, and humbly informed her that I was a sort of literary Bohemian, picking up a precarious subsistence at the point of my pen, she merely smiled, and said, "That's true," and acted precisely as though she had known it all the time, and rather admired me for my candor in admitting the lamentable fact.

She said I had hopes, and aspirations, and doubts, and fears, (singular, rather.) That I was attended by several spirits—both kinds, but that the male spirits had most influence, though one little female spirit, beautiful beyond description, brought me flowers, and, at such times I was impressed to write of tuberoses and all sorts of floral institutions.

I presume she must have been around with a bouquet when I wrote about clover blossoms and honeysuckle back there; I didn't think of it at the time, but I almost know that was the case. At last the physicianess, with the unpronounceable prefixture, declared herself fatigued and her vision obscured, and she would have to come out of her trance, which she accomplished by a few passes of the left hand over the forehead. She started upon opening her eyes, and seemed astonished to see me sitting there—but she had not forgotten the conversation about the dollar.

But I did not set out to write about "fortune-telling" altogether, for, in my opinion, it is not the most interesting of subjects, in fact it is almost as stupid as politics, and on that head I do not intend to say a word, though a friend of mine is speaking of Horace and "what he knew about farming," told me the other day that the great philanthropist had a rooster sitting on an egg-plant. So people are always hatching up something ridiculous to say about "our later Franklin." I am half inclined to think he hasn't anything of the sort.

ON FASHIONS

there really isn't much to say. The truth of the matter is that summer styles are terribly stale and threadbare—and what wonder considering the same shapes have been written up and described every week for the last six months by half a million, more or less, of would-be reporters—and it is a trifle too early for winter styles. It is, however, officially announced that the polonaise is out of date—that it has had its day—that its brilliant career is ended. I don't know how much of that official announcement to believe, for positively I counted nine hundred and ninety-nine of those garments on the promenade yesterday, and if I had gone another step I could have made it an even thousand. I could not have stood it though. One more polonaise would have thrown me into brain fever, or spinal meningitis, or cholera infantum, or some other dreadful ailment. But I do like the way the ladies wear their hair. That tin basin out (that's what we called it at school) is about the most fascinating thing we have had in some time. A plain face is almost beautiful when the hair is combed straight down over the forehead and chopped off just above the eyebrows; though now that I think of it some don't admire it; a chronic grumbler said in my presence only a few days ago, that he didn't believe Mother Nature would have given the ladies any hair if she could have foreseen the present fashion. I don't agree with him. I think it is charming, especially when the forehead is low, and the hair stiff and bristling and refractory.

Hats it would seem are likely to be pretty small and of the "turban" shape, with a little variation. Veils of every description are fashionable, and whether worn long or short depends entirely upon the fancy of the wearer. In outer garments it is impossible, as yet, to say what will be most popular. There is a rumor that close-fitting garments for street wear will give way to loose jackets and Talmas; but Dame Rumor is not always to be relied upon, and no one need be surprised if all outside garments should make their appearance as tight as, as—the gentlemen on New-Year's day, for instance.

Respectfully, OLIVE KING.

The Wreck of the Metis.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A correspondent thus describes the appearance of the beach and ocean after the late terrible disaster to the Metis:

To-day I have been walking and riding upon the Watch-Hill beach, to view the melancholy fragments of that ill-fated vessel, and picture to myself the terrible scenes so recently transpiring there. Crowds of curious people blackened the shore, making the wreck itself inconspicuous, at least when seen from the neighboring hills.

The sky was lovely. The air was chilly. The surf still broke in high majestic billows upon the shifting sands, although a day had passed since the storm. Almost every conceivable kind of material might be found promiscuously mingled where the debris lay thickest; splinters of wood everywhere; here a hat, there a boot or stocking, here a stuffed chair seat with its disembowelled contents mashed into a firkin of butter, there fragments of ladies' clothing shredded by wave or wind and interwisted with seaweed until nothing short of cutting could part them. I saw a sailor's padded coat, so thick and strong that apparently human hands could not have torn it, yet it was slit up the back as if by a knife.

The undertow is always strong on this east beach, and the sand is continually being shifted about. No doubt much of the wreck lies buried beneath the sand, with human bodies also, which may remain hidden perhaps for weeks or months until some other storm shall uncover them. What strikes one most strangely is the smallness of the fragments of the wrecked vessel. The whole craft, that is the portion of it which has come ashore, seems literally split up into kindling wood, except a spar and a couple of pieces of deck flooring. Mattrasses and bales of cotton lay buried in the sand, with only a small portion cropping out to reveal their existence. Bales, barrels and boxes of goods are heaped here, scattered there, among passengers' unclaimed baggage, and piles of splintered wood, iron tubing and railing, and wrecks of cabin furniture.

The conspicuous labels on some of the shattered boxes, "*Keep dry*," "*Handle with care*," "*This side up with care*," look up appealingly from the awful wreck, while the jubilant breakers that come leaping exultantly upon the resonant shore, seem to answer in sardonic mockery of man's care and foresight, and skill and strength, "Aye! Handle with care? We have obeyed your behest, oh potent man! We have handled with care! We have fingered the tresses of fair ladies! We have washed the cherub faces of tender children! We have embraced the sinewy forms of stalwart seamen! We have handled with care the dear treasures you have committed to us, with care to mock, to maim, to buffet, to bruise, to dash hither, thither in our furious mirth your fine, brave, beautiful baubles, oh, puny man! Take them back if you can find them; bewail them whether you find them or no; for we have wrought our own wild will upon them: aye, we have handled them with care!"

It is terrible to picture the sufferings of the survivors of the wreck during those few hours which followed the fatal accident that destroyed the Metis; how much more terrible must have been the reality. Those who have escaped with life seem to have been saved by a miracle of God's mercy.

WARF.

A LAST GOOD-BYE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Chide me not;—the word is spoken;
Bidding ev'ry hope to die;
Let me give this one sad token!
"Tis the last—the last "good-bye!"

Couldst thou know how *dearly* cherished,
Were the hopes of those brief hours,—
Those too lovely hopes which perished
With the fading summer flowers,—

Hadst thou seen thy image seated,
Like an angel's in my heart,—
Heard each inward thought repeated,
Which hath said, "how fair thou art—"

Then, oh, *then*, thou hadst not left me
To this lonely life of pain,
Nor of those fond hopes bereft me,
Which can never come again.

When thy years of youth have faded,
And thy thoughts are backward cast,
And thy gentle soul is shaded
By the memories of the past,

Then, oh, then, not all forgetting,
Thou will still remember me;
Then may come at least regretting,
For the love now spurned by thee.

There can be no soul replying,
In those future years to thine,
With a tone of love undying,
Pure, and deep, and sad as mine.

Then—when longing for affection,
In thy spirit's secret call,
There may come a recollection
Of the heart that loved so well.

But, 'tis vain! to me remaineth—
Naught, but unavailing sighs,
And the thought that ever paineth,
And the grief that never dies.

There are days of darker sorrow
Than may come with dying breath;
There are lives, whose every morrow
Comes more full of pain than death.

These to me thou hast appointed!
Made my hope a withered leaf;
And my soul thou hast anointed—
With the bitter oil of *grief*;

Each chill word which thou hast spoken,
Wrung my heart with more than pain,
Each cold look that heart has broken,
Telling it "thy love is vain."

Oh, *how could thou* thus distress me,
Slighting love so deep as mine,
And the spirit which to bless thee,
Even would dare to die for thine?

Fate—in hope's once fairest palace—
Like the altar-lights to pale,
And from Love's divinest chalice,
Hath decreed the wine to fail.

Thus, all cold, and drear, and shaded,
Pass in gloom the future hours!
From my heart hope's plant has faded;—
What remains?—Love's withered flowers!

FRANK.

PERSONAL.

The voyage of the Grand Duke Alexis has thus far cost his father upwards of a half a million of dollars. Rather an expensive young man.

Actually, there are people in England who think we are all savages over here yet. The first remark made by an English nobleman who was introduced to Clara Louise Kellogg during her recent visit to England, was, "Do you speak English?"

The ex-Empress Eugenie now dresses almost entirely in black and red. Her beautiful hair is beginning to show threads of silver.

The Emperor of Germany recently paid two hundred dollars for an autograph letter of Washington.

Pere Hyacinthe's marriage is said to have wonderfully increased the foreign demand for American widows.

Stanley, the African explorer, will lecture in this country in January. He is now writing a book, which will bear the modest title of "How I found Livingstone." We wonder when he's going to set out in search of the ten lost tribes of Israel.

Napoleon and Eugenie say they can't go anywhere in England, without being stared at.

Delightful Joe Jefferson is not lost to us yet. Various statements having been published in regard to the condition of his eye, and the cancelling of his dramatic engagements, that gentleman, in a note says: "Please state that my eye is completely cured, but that I deem it prudent to retire from the stage until next season."

By an imperial decree the Austrian Court will wear mourning for twelve days for the deceased King of Sweden.

The Mikado of Japan gets his photograph taken, and sells the copies to his loving subjects at fifty cents apiece.

Turkish ladies won't have their faces all covered any more: they are asserting their rights to be seen. High-born Osman damsels now dress in Parisian style, wearing veils of the thinnest possible gauze, which soften without concealing the features.

"Bismarck," says a Berlin Jenkins, "smokes daily nine twenty-cent segars, and drinks about four dollars' worth of beer and wine. His tailor's bill annually amounts, on an average, to $600, and he pays his servants, in the aggregate, about $2,400 a year."

Mr. Conway sketches the young son of the ex-Emperor Napoleon, in this fashion: "The lad who was once Prince Imperial has grown into a long, lank fellow, with swarthy complexion, a long, narrow, unprepossessing face. He parts his hair in the middle. There are some elements of strength about his face and I should not wonder at his trying some day to claim a throne."

Stanley is certainly a "self-made man." The Graphic says he is a New Yorker; the Illustrated London News believes him to be a Missourian; a correspondent of a Welch paper gives the name of his birthplace in Wales, and he says he has spent many happy hours with him (Stanley) in Africa. What's in a birthplace, etc.?

The musical announcements for the coming season are certainly very attractive. What with Lucca, and Kellogg, and Patti, and Mario, and Rubinstein, and divers others, "too numerous to mention," our music loving community will have abundant opportunity of gratifying their taste.

Speaking of the wit of Buchanan Read, a recent magazine article says: "It was only a few mornings before he breathed his last, that a dear friend, sitting by his bedside, held his wasted hand. Upon one finger was a beautiful cameo ring. 'Ah! I see you have a head of Shakspeare,' she said, as she examined the well-cut features of the bard. 'Yes,' he answered, feebly; 'it is the only way I could get a-head of him.'"

The New York Tribune says of Mario's reappearance in that city:

"There were hundreds who remembered the sweet voice and noble delivery of seventeen years ago, and longed to welcome the great artist once more as an old friend. There were still more who knew the famous tenor only by the tradition of their elders, and were eager even to look upon the singer whose name illustrates one of the brightest chapters in musical history. He did not appear last night till the end of the first part, and then he merely took his share in the quintet from *Un Ballo in Maschera, E scherzo è follia*. He was warmly received as he came upon the stage, yet not with any superfluous enthusiasm; people were busy, perhaps, trying to trace in that stately, well-preserved gentleman, with ruddy face and dark beard, the 'Fernando' who won all hearts and charmed all eyes and ears so many seasons ago. Let us tell the truth as tenderly as we can: the art remains, of course—the pure style, the elegant phrasing, the keen sensibility—but that is nearly all. At moments here and there a faint flavor of the ancient tones carries us back in fancy across the wide chasm of years; we shut our eyes to the scene before us, and again the youthful Mario fills the stage with his presence, and the voice which had no rival, rings sweet and pure through the chambers of memory. But it is after all a melancholy recollection. For those who cannot associate the ruin with its pristine glories, the exhibition must be terribly disappointing: for those who do recall the past it is necessarily painful. Signor Mario sang little last night. His only solo, on the lilla, was the *Spirito gentil* from *La Favorita*, the romanza which he almost made immortal. Time was when he seemed to sing that right out of his heart, and he drew tears with it from the dryest eyes. Now, losing in part the control of his voice, he has lost something of his power of expression; yet one can see that the delicacy of his feeling is unimpaired, though his muscles may refuse to obey his will. He sings with extreme care, slipping over the high notes, and dropping the highest altogether. His voice was a little too husky before he had finished; but he was recalled and gave the pretty song which Hatton wrote for him, 'Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye.' It was a sad thing to hear; yet how beautifully he used what resources Time had left him, how much tenderness and elegance the old man threw into those familiar lines. We are glad to say that his welcome grew heartier and heartier as the evening wore away. He deserves the highest testimony of our respect; for he is one of the few really great singers of our generation, and it will be a pity if he does not carry away with him a substantial mark of the esteem in which Americans still hold him."

From the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

[We recommend this article, from the authority above quoted, particularly to the attention of parents and teachers.]

The close of the summer vacation and the return of thousands of children to their wonted places in the school-room, suggests a brief inquiry whether the methods of discipline and study are consistent with sound hygienic and sanitary principles.

During the past season we have been called in many instances to attend upon children whose health in various ways had seriously suffered from the systems now pursued in the public schools. These cases embrace nervous affections, chorea, hysteria, nervous debility (so called,) febrile excitement or depression, and other disturbances, resulting from overwork, or from tasks suited rather to adult than to youthful heads and minds, and from the methods by which the performance thereof is enforced and obtained. It may be that the tasks were not always too long; but when, for instance, a class of young girls is required to carry up, as an ordinary lesson in physiology, a written account of the circulation of the blood—a task which would puzzle most parents, not to say some doctors, to do intelligibly—one cannot help thinking that such a task cannot be too short. It should be, as the lazy boy wished of his Latin nouns, declined altgether.

But if the tasks are not generally too severe, they are exacted by what would seem very objectionable methods. The grand idea prevailing throughout the whole system, from infant to normal schools, is promotion. To be advanced (?) on a given day to the next higher class or division, is the whip wherewith to lash the jaded victim over the rough road and through the tiresome ways. Not to be hindermost is the great bugbear urging on the aspirant, from the cradle onward.

Who is responsible for this state of things? Go to the teacher, and we are informed that the evil is fully appreciated, but he can do nothing; the committee make the rules, and the teacher must carry them out at his peril. Go to the committee—they are only public servants; the public demands a high mental cultivation, and free institutions are safe only in the hands of the educated. Our common schools are our glory, and they must not be allowed to fall behind the requisites of the times! The fault is in the children themselves, not in the system, that they break down. A committee can no more find healthy bodies for the pupils than they can supply them with brains. This, or its equivalent, is the usual result of any attempt to ameliorate the system.

In contrast, we know a school where, with strict order and discipline, the pupils are made to appreciate that what to-day they are learning is something in itself useful to them, something they will be happier for knowing after the troublesome work is accomplished, something which will help them to gain other knowledge to-morrow, something for themselves, no matter what others do or are—not something merely by which to get ahead of others, or to gain admission to a higher class—that will take care of itself. In this school (and it is not ideal or faultless) self-dependence, individuality, are promoted; personal peculiarities are studied and improved upon, but not subverted; and everything done with the view of making each pupil "self-contained" and efficient. One day in the week is entirely the pupil's, even to lying in bed till noon if breakfast is not cared for; and this day, of all others, is the one on which the teacher depends for discovering the real characters of the pupils, and for devising the best expedients for improving them. Every week the order of excellence in everything, studies, manners, and even dress and the mode of managing it, is announced to the full school, but no comments are made upon individuals.

Is it not possible to learn some wisdom from the management of such schools, and is it not time to devise some improvement on the high-pressure, competitive system generally in vogue, and to introduce some more sensible methods which shall promote more fully health of body while they develope mental vigor?

STRICT LETTER OF THE LAW.

A young woman recently appeared before the Court at Lieges, with a demand for a separation or divorce from her husband, on the ground that her husband had hired a suite of apartments which she could not occupy. She was informed that this simple disregard of her wishes was not sufficient ground for a divorce. The law demanded that she should follow her husband.

"What! the law compels me to follow my husband?"

"Certainly."

"We shall see, then."

The lady disappeared, and at once attached herself to her husband, and followed him every step that he took for two days. This was sufficient to attract the attention of the whole city, for the poor husband could no more escape her than he could his shadow. Finally the police interfered, and she was arrested for causing the gathering of a crowd in the streets.

☞ When Stephen Pearl Andrews, the Pantarch Harmonizer and Universologist, was asked, some time ago, why he didn't run for the Presidency, he replied, loftily, "It's too small game for me."

☞ An exchange says the Chattahoochie River is being washed for gold. That's nothing; anything can be washed for gold, from a tin basin to a character.

☞ A waiter in an Algiers restaurant has a pair of mustaches that he can tie behind the back of his head in a bowknot.

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MICHAELMAS.

BY ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

The brown leaves rustle in the wind,
And golden is the oak-tree's crown;
The red beech drops her ripen'd mast,
And chestnut husks come showering down.

September's kiss is on the woods,
And garner'd is Pomona's wealth;
The squirrel thinks of winter rest,
Begins to store his nuts by stealth.

Gone are the roses, crimson flowers
That crown'd the virgin brow of June;
And where the nightingale hath sung,
The robin pipes his mellow tune.

One touch of frost is on the blades
Of grass beneath the forest-tree;
Close in his lair the dormouse lies,
And nestled in her cell the bee.

The last geraniums still shed
On manor-lawn a scarlet glow;
The queen chrysanthemum hath don'd
Her robes of whiter—rose and snow.

The latest breath of summer stirs
Upon the leaves and in the air;
It shakes the cones amid the fire,
And straight is gone we know not where.

So oft a gleam of sunshine past
Re-shines again in man's last days;
Summer and winter, smiles and tears—
Wiser than ours, are Heaven's ways.

"ROY'S WIFE."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

Celia Randal had jilted Jack Leland in a most heartless manner. There was no doubt about that; and everybody knew it, and talked about it. He had been her shadow for full a year. He had spent snug little sums upon her in the shape of bouquets, and philopœna presents, and carriage-hire, and operas, and theatres, and the like.

I speak of these things because Jack was a poor man, and worked hard in a den of an office over ledgers and books for his living. He had a salary too, for singing in church. He was leader of the choir in an aristocratic church, and his tenor voice was simply superb. People said that was what won the heart of fair Celia Randal, the belle of society. For everybody supposed her heart was won, or she never would have allowed Jack Leland to follow her so. When she flirted, she looked for higher game. But she really seemed to care for Jack, smiled upon him, encouraged him, and showed all the symptoms of a genuine affection.

People talked the matter over, and concluded that it was a very wise step for her to take after all. Jack was a general favorite, was honest and industrious, intelligent, and talented in the musical line, besides being extremely good-looking. He was not rich, and probably never would be; but he would make an excellent husband, and Celia was rich enough for both.

That was the way people talked the matter over, while Jack dreamed his love dream. And Celia—well, she *did* love Jack very tenderly, or she never would have allowed his attentions. His dark eyes and superb voice set her heart to fluttering, and quickened her pulse as no man had ever done before.

She meant to accept him at one time. But just at that time Jack had not the courage to propose; was afraid she might deem him too forward, too much in a hurry, and so he waited until he was surer of his footing. And while he was waiting, Old Moneybags, in the shape of Le Roy McPherson, turned his eyes in her direction. He was old, and fat, and irritable, but he was immensely rich, and had some sort of a title that he came by accidentally, and was considered a very great catch. He looked upon Celia, and concluded he needed just such a pretty, plump, accomplished wife, and so without more ado he asked her father for her hand. Her father was flattered and delighted, and promised to urge his daughter to accept Old Moneybags. That very day Jack had called and made a glowing declaration of love, and ended by asking Celia to be his wife.

She had confessed her love for him, but desired a few days to consider his proposal; more out of pure woman-wickedness, just to keep him in suspense, than for any other cause. But when old McPherson's offer came, she had her hands full. It was such a chance to make a stir! Why he was known everywhere, and had access to the very best society, on account of his title and wealth. Jack was very nice, and very lovable—but a marriage with him would be a very tame affair, compared to the glittering, dazzling wedding she could have if she married the other.

Well, she made her decision, and accepted Le Roy McPherson, and sent her answer to Jack Leland after some tears, and sobs, which she indulged herself in when she sat down to write the letter.

Jack read the cool note with a white, stern face—read it several times, and then tore it in small pieces, and tossed it into the grate with a bitter laugh. That was the end of his love dream. That was the death-blow to his love, too. Henceforth, he could feel only contempt for Celia Randal. Yet he suffered very keenly. His love for her had become a part of him, and it was like tearing out the strings of his heart, to have it wrenched from him so suddenly and rudely.

People watched him very closely, but they saw no change. He worked away as hard as ever, and occupied his usual place in the choir, Sundays, and his voice lost none of its strength or sweetness. He was not a man to make a display of his feelings.

Celia had a grand wedding, and the affair was the nine days' wonder. The happy couple took an extended wedding-trip, and then returned and settled down in the magnificent McPherson mansion. Celia's life was all glitter, and gold, and brilliancy, on the outside. But her husband was horribly jealous, and nearly worried her life out of her when they were alone.

She went into society a great deal, and she often met Jack Leland. He had, instead of becoming a hermit, as she and many others had imagined, accepted more invitations to parties and dinners and balls than ever before in his life. He was becoming more of a favorite than ever since his romance, and young ladies talked sentimentally about the aching heart that he was hiding under a gay exterior. They made quite a hero of him.

And so, wherever she went, Celia was sure to meet him, and Old Moneybags would sit and watch the pair, and if they spoke or bowed or glanced at each other, Celia would receive a long curtain lecture afterward.

He was insolent, too, and never lost a chance to snub Jack. He was terribly jealous, and hated Jack for having loved Celia, for being handsome and young and slender, and not at all inclined to apoplexy. And, besides, he was sure Celia had loved Jack, and had married *him* for his money. So he lost no opportunity to humiliate and insult Jack.

It was borne very patiently for a time. Jack would not resent any of his insults, because he knew people would say he had picked a quarrel with his successful rival. So he tried forbearance, until it ceased to be a virtue. Old McPherson sought opportunities to snub him—even went out of his way to offer him some petty insult.

One night they were at a reception. He tried to keep out of the way, but McPherson managed to keep near him, and in a thousand nameless ways, to sting him. You know how the biting and stinging of musquitoes feels, yet it cannot be described.

Well, Jack's blood was at boiling pitch, when somebody asked him to sing. He was always asked to sing wherever he went, and he always sang.

To-night he did not wait for a second invitation, but went and took his seat at the piano. Everybody stopped talking to listen. Old Moneybags could find no one to talk to, and so, much against his will, was obliged to listen, too.

The song Jack sang was "Roy's wife." He sang it exquisitely. There was a tender pathos in his voice when he sang—

"Her hair so fair, her eye so clear,
Her wee bit mouth so sweet and bonny,
To me she ever will be dear,
Tho' she's forever left her Johnnie."

There was gentle reproof in his tones when he sang—

"She vowed, she swore she would be mine,
She said she loved me best of any,
But ah! the fickle, faithless queen,
She's ta'un the carl, and left her Johnnie."

There was courage and glee and an airy lightness in his voice when he reached the last verse and sang—

"But Roy's age is three times mine,
I'm sure his days cannot be many,
And then the fickle, faithless queen,
May yet be wooed, and won by Johnnie."

It was splendidly sung and splendidly acted. He seemed to throw his whole heart into the song. Everybody in the spacious parlors drank in the rich music of his voice. Everybody looked at Celia McPherson. She blushed crimson at the first verse, but was very pale at the end of the song.

It was an audacious thing to do. He never would have done it, but for the insults he was smarting under. Everybody praised his singing, and begged for another song, but Jack bowed himself away, made his excuses to the hostess, and took his departure.

The next day he heard what happened after he went away. Le Roy McPherson remained in the seat near the window, which he had occupied while Jack was singing. He was greatly agitated while Jack sang. His face grew purple with rage, his eyes rolled, and he was heard to grind his teeth. But he said no word. It was a very warm night, and he had drank a great deal of wine at supper. Perhaps that had something to do with it—perhaps the song helped. At all events, half an hour after Jack's departure, Le Roy McPherson fell from his seat in a fit. It caused a great commotion. Physicians were summoned, and everything was done that could be done, all to no avail. Le Roy McPherson's days were numbered. He was too free in the indulgence of his appetites, too plethoric in person, too excitable and insane in his anger, to recover from a fit brought on by all these habits combined.

So he died, and was buried in grand style. Of course there was a great deal said about Jack's song. Some declared Le Roy would not have fallen into the fit but for that song. Yet no one really held Jack accountable for his rival's death. At least he was not arrested for his murder.

Celia dressed in rich mourning robes, and looked perfectly charming. She was a pale blonde, and she assumed a sad expression which made her very interesting. But we all knew she could but be relieved at the death of her tyrant. Especially as the property was every cent in her hands.

Somehow the words of that song would haunt her brain,

"And then the fickle, faithless queen
May yet be wooed and won by Johnnie,"

and ere a twelvemonth had passed she found herself humming them softly.

She allowed herself to dream a little and build castles with *love* for the foundation. She smiled and beamed upon Jack Leland from her half-mourning, and finally burst upon his vision in bright, becoming colors, having dropped mourning at the earliest moment possible. She was sure Jack was only waiting for that to propose. So she was quite surprised when she received an invitation to the wedding of Miss Kitty Evarts, the sweetest and most charming of her young lady friends, and found that Jack Leland was the groom. She wept more tears than she had ever shed over the grave of her husband, for *this* was the grave of her heart's dearest hope. We are sorry for her of course, but we know she deserved it. She is a widow still, and is obliged to meet Jack and his charming wife frequently. However with a half million or so, youth, health, and beauty at her command, she is not to be pitied very much.

FALLING LEAVES.

AN AUTUMN REVERY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

One by one, one by one, slowly, silently the leaves are falling. Falling like jewels from a regal coronet, so gorgeous are they; red, sahen, russet, scarlet, orange, umber, and golden; fluttering, flitting, noiselessly, until, softly drifting away, like a shower of tropical blossoms, they reach the ground.

The melancholy Autumn wind wails a dirge over the graves of the beautiful flowers of Summer; the gentle rain, pattering on roof and casement, sings plaintively a farewell to the birds, who have flown to warmer climes. Amid the arcades of the forest the golden rod and scarlet columbine gleam like lost paris, radiant in robes of beauty. The river rolls majestically onward, and still the leaves fall. One by one, like the banners of a conquering host, like the pennons of a victorious vessel, they wave and flutter. Like showers of gold, spattered with drops of blood, like a rain of gems, they fall to the ground, carpeting the earth with a rich mosaic more beautiful than ever dreamed of by poets in their wildest visions of royal splendor.

Yet, though beautiful, how mournful the season when the leaves fall. These falling leaves are like the last hopes of the heart, dropping off, one by one, day by day, leaving their source bare and desolate.

So vanish our hopes, blown away by the stern wind of Adversity, scattered by the storms of Sorrow, chilled by the frosts of Old Age and Penury. MYRTILLA.

☞ An indulgent Kansas parent sold his cooking stove for $11 in order to take his thirteen children to the circus. He says a circus only comes two or three times a year, and, besides, he never had much to cook on the stove, anyhow.

☞ A colored man in North Carolina pulled a mule's tail to show his docility. His funeral sermon was an hour and a half long.

FAR! SO FAR!

BY REA.

My love was sad and said,—even yet
I hear his voice,—"You'll not forget,
Half-Jove I do not take or give,
And, sweet I, I'll love you while I live!"
And not a word my lips would say,
And then he sail'd away—away,
Far! so far! so far!

The thousand buds of blushing spring,
The flow'rs that summer glories bring,
The autumn leaves that crimson glow,
The winter's wind and clinging snow
All came and went, and went and came,
Yet never once I heard his name,
Far! so far! so far!

At last one day, in wind and rain,
I saw his ship come home again;
And then I heard how never more
My love would meet me on the shore,
How never could he hear or know
That all the time I loved him so,
Far! so far! so far!

A BLACK SHEEP IN THE FOLD;

OR,

THE SECRET FEUD.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY RETT WINWOOD.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK.

Victor turned slowly, and slowly looked up. It was the hand of Miles Rugby; and Miles stood there close to his side, as if he had suddenly risen from the floor.

His face was awful to look upon. The gray, livid pallor of hate, and rage, and terror had spread over it. It was the face of a devil incarnate, suffering all the tortures of hell—and not the face of a mortal man.

Its expression froze Victor to the soul. It even drove away the emotions that had been roused in him by the single sentence he had read from that paper. It made him forget everything but the horror then confronting him.

For many seconds the two men stood and glared at each other. Strange thoughts were passing in the mind of each. But neither of them spoke.

At last the color came slowly back to Miles's face. There was nothing left of his strange pallor save a white line about the lips. He crumpled the paper he had snatched from Victor in his hand, thrust it back into the drawer, closed the drawer, and closed and locked the desk.

Then he spoke.

"I suspected all along, why you chose to leave Roundwood, come to Hook Dock, and establish yourself in this dismal place with me. Now I know my suspicions did not mislead me."

Victor did not answer. He could not. The fountain of speech seemed to be frozen up within him.

"Have you succeeded in your mission?" Miles went on, in a tone through which ran a tremor of devilish hatred. "Have you found out what you came here to find out?"

Victor bowed his head.

"And you think you know me now for what I am?"

Another nod was the only answer he got.

Miles glanced keenly at the young man, then burst into a hoarse, contemptuous laugh.

"Your never were more deluded in all your life, my lad, than you are at this moment. But come, you and I will not quarrel, no matter what may happen. It would be vastly more sensible of us to sit down and talk this matter over together, and try to come to an understanding."

Victor stared. The man's coolness filled him with surprise. He began to doubt the evidence of his own senses—began to doubt what he had seen with his own eyes.

"I am quite ready to hear anything you may have to say," he faltered, finding voice at last.

"That's sensible. But we can't talk here. Ugh!" and a shiver ran through the reprobate's frame. "This place chills me to the bone. Come into your bed-room."

He led the way. Victor followed mechanically. He could not help it, somehow. His brain seemed dazed and bewildered. He could see nothing, comprehend nothing clearly.

Miles pushed him into a chair, and then went away for a moment. When he returned, he brought with him a bottle of wine and two glasses.

"We both stand in need of a stimulant," he said, pouring out the wine. "Drink to my health, dear boy, as I drink to yours. Both our heads will be clearer afterward, for what we have to do."

Victor took the glass. He hesitated a minute, looking straight into the villain's eyes. Then he drained his glass to the dregs.

Miles made a pretence of drinking, too. But he pushed his glass behind him the moment he took it from his lips, and Victor could not tell whether he had more than tasted its contents or not.

Something uglier than ever now twinkled in the corners of his treacherous eyes. He reached out a hand that trembled like a reed shaken by the wind, and dropped it on Victor's shoulder.

"Tell me what you have discovered," he said.

"I know now that you are a liar and a hypocrite," the young man burst out fiercely. "You have tried to impose on me, and on my poor mother, from first to last."

"Your mother? God forbid! I love her too well to do that."

"*You* love her too well!"

The stinging contempt expressed in tone and gesture was something beyond Miles's powers of endurance.

"Yes, curse you!" he yelled, gnashing his teeth. "Whether you believe it or not, I do love her. But we will drop that. Tell me what else you know of me."

"I know that this mad woman, whom I have seen once or twice,—don't start, for I *have* seen her, and talked with her, too,—is your victim."

A change of expression passed over Miles's face at these words, that daunted Victor a little. He sat still in his chair, silently watching the man before him, for some minutes.

"I suppose you refer to Mad Miriam," said the villain, at last.

"Yes, to Mad Miriam, the woman with whom you fled from your own friends so many years ago."

"Humph."

"The child, Lurline, whose loss seems to have turned her brain, was your child and hers."

Miles gave a great gasp, and his breast began to heave. His two quivering hands crept instinctively toward Victor's throat, but he drew them back without having touched him.

"Go on," he said, hiding his face.

"I have no more to tell you on that subject. Let me shift to another; or rather, let me say a word in relation to another victim of yours."

"Well?" shifting his position, but still keeping his face averted.

Victor hesitated an instant. Dared he brave this remorseless villain to do his worst, as he must, if he spoke the words that were now on his lips? It was a terrible risk, but he resolved to take it.

"You have caused a sane man to be shut up in a private mad-house called Belgrave House?"

"What!"

The villain fairly started to his feet, growing livid again with surprise and rage. He glared at Victor as if tempted to strike him dead as he sat. Then, after one terrible moment, he wheeled slowly, and began to walk backward and forward over the floor.

He seemed to be considering with himself. At last he said in a very low tone of voice:

"You make strange accusations, my lad. Perhaps you will be good enough to tell me the name of the man whose liberty, according to your account, I have taken away?"

"No," shaking his head, "I cannot do that. I have not been able to learn his name as yet."

Miles gave vent to a low laugh.

He had an unpleasant laugh, this man, and it had never rung so disagreeably in Victor's ears as at this moment. It fairly turned him cold.

He had reason to feel uneasy. Ever since drinking the wine he had felt a strange, awful lethargy stealing over him and mastering his senses. Its power grew and grew, in spite of his efforts to shake it off. It was in his brain, confusing and bewildering him; it was in his limbs, taking away their power of free volition. It was making a helpless child of him in the hands of this treacherous villain with whom he had to deal.

His head dropped on his breast. Then he became conscious that Miles's evil eyes were upon him; that the wretch was laughing at him again, in awful, devilish triumph.

He started up with the cry of a wounded lion. He fought against the deathly lethargy as he would have fought against grim death.

"What have you done to me?" he shrieked. "Oh, you coward, what have you done to me?"

"I have drugged you."

Victor stood still a moment, with both hands pressed against his forehead. It took him all that time, even after hearing those terrible words, to comprehend their full import.

"I will baffle you yet," he cried. "You shall not add *me* to the list of your victims."

He broke for the door, but his limbs refused to support him as they ought. A film had come before his eyes, and he staggered helplessly and blindly.

He succeeded in reaching the passage, however. Then Miles sprang after him and set upon him, and Miles's hands clutched murderously at his throat.

"You mean to give the alarm," the villain shrieked. "You mean to get away from me. But I swear you shall do neither."

Victor closed with him and began to struggle blindly, feeling his strength ebbing faster and faster, and a blank darkness shutting him in. Then, after a moment of terrible suspense, he heard the echo of footsteps faintly, as if miles and miles away, and then a voice broke on his ear—

"Oh, my love, my life!"

It was Dora's voice, and would almost have called him from the grave itself. He made one last superhuman effort to recover his senses, broke through the blindness and darkness that were swooping upon him, and saw the dear girl in the other end of the passage, struggling in the arms of two men.

"Dora—Dora—why are—you here?" he cried, thickly and incoherently.

While the words were still on his lips, he made a dash toward the spot where he had seen her standing. But he never reached it. The darkness swooped down nearer and more horrible than ever, and he fell moaning to the floor.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CAUGHT IN THE TOILS.

Dora Desmond's sudden appearance in the vile precincts of Hook Dock requires a few words of explanation.

Her heart was sore, and she was more wretched than she had ever been in all her life, after having discovered, as she thought, Victor's double perfidy.

The shame and anguish of having been loved and sought by him while he had a wife living, was more than she could patiently endure.

"Oh, the pitiful coward," she moaned. "The love he felt for me must have been very vile and selfish, or he could never have contemplated doing me so foul a wrong. Can I ever forgive him? Can I ever do aught but hate and despise him?"

Poor girl! Her bitter tears and moanings did not look much like either hatred or scorn.

She bore her troubles bravely, however, and said not a word to Mrs. Raynham.

In spite of her grief, Victor's sudden departure from Roundwood perplexed her. Of course it was very much better that he should go: of course she could never speak to him again after what had happened. But, woman-like, she fretted herself nearly sick because he had gone and left no word behind him.

"I have driven him to do something desperate," she would cry, wringing her hands. "He could not endure my scorn, after all. Oh, God help him! Oh, God be merciful to him!"

After two or three days passed in this manner, she sought Vincent in the library one morning, and cried out to him in a voice pathetic with despair:

"Why don't you find your brother? Why don't you bring him back to Roundwood? Oh, I shall go mad if this suspense continues much longer."

Vincent seemed very much disconcerted by these words. But he gently took her hand and sought to pacify her.

"It is best as it is, Dora. Victor can never be anything to you, remember, while Honoria Vance lives. Let him go. You are wrong to wish him back again."

"No, no, no! It does not matter if I never set eyes on him again myself. But he will be ruined forever if he remains away from Roundwood; or he may be tempted to take his own life. And it was I who drove him away. I can't forget that—sleeping or waking, I can't forget that."

She saw Vincent shrink and grow pale while she was speaking. Catching him almost fiercely by the arm, she went on:

"I tell you I can't live if this suspense lasts much longer. No matter how bitterly Victor may have wronged me, I do not wish him harm. Go for him, Vincent; oh, bring him back this very day!"

"I don't know where to look for him."

"Go to—"

She was about to say, "Go to Hook Dock," but paused before all the words had left her lips. She had no right to speak them. If she sent Vincent there, he was sure to discover the very secret Mrs. Raynham was trying to keep from him—the secret of Miles Rugby's pretended relationship.

"May God help us all," she moaned.

Vincent looked at her closely. His arm slid slowly round her waist. "I wish you loved me one-thousandth part as well as you love my erring brother," he whispered.

She clung to him, sobbing bitterly. "And if I did?" she said, at last.

"With God's help, I would make your lot in life a peaceful and happy one."

"It is too late for that," she answered, but did not shrink from him.

"It is never too late, sweet Dora. You have only to tear this unworthy love out of your heart. And you can never do that until you are ready to accept another man's love in its place."

She shuddered and hid her face, but did not speak.

"It would be better for us all if you would promise to be my wife," he went on. "Then Victor could come back, and take his old place among us. And you, my Dora, would have the satisfaction of showing him that he has not crushed you with his baseness—that you *will not* break your heart because of him!"

He had touched the right chord at last, and it vibrated painfully. She started away from him, flung up her head haughtily, and called the color back to her cheeks again.

"The man who has deceived me shall not find a love-sick girl waiting for him when he *does* return!" she cried, with a flash of her old fire. "Here is my hand, Vincent. If you care to take me and make me your wife, knowing all the truth, as you do, I shall no longer say you nay."

"*If* I care to take you, Dora?" he echoed, darting toward her impetuously. "If I care to take you? God bless you! Oh, my life, my love, you do not know how happy you have made me!"

She gently repulsed him when he would have taken her in his arms.

"Not now," she said. "Not another word now, or I shall regret having yielded my consent."

She turned swiftly, as she spoke, and fled from the room.

Then, after a little reflection, her heart reproached her for what she had done. It seemed so cowardly and weak to accept a new love so readily, in place of the old. Instead of thus showing her strength, she had really shown her folly.

But she had given Vincent her word, and now it was too late for regrets.

Later in the day she went to Mrs. Raynham, and told her what she had done.

"I have broken faith with Victor," she said, simply, keeping back the cause entirely, and taking all the blame upon herself. "And now I am to marry Vincent in his stead."

Mrs. Raynham recoiled, and began to tremble.

"You have broken faith with Victor?" she repeated, loudly and incredulously.

"Yes, madam."

"You have scorned his love, that you might become the wife of another man?"

"Yes, madam," said Dora, in a choking voice.

"Girl, how could you be so cruel?" and the indignant woman drew away from her with a flaming crimson in either cheek. "God forgive you, for you have broken the heart of the noblest man that ever lived."

"Don't say that, madam. If you knew all, I am sure you would not say that."

"And if *you* knew all, you would say it with ten times the earnestness with which I say it. The lover you have seen fit to despise is even now risking his life at my bidding. And you, unfeeling girl, have taken advantage of his absence to transfer your allegiance to another. Oh, cruel, cruel!"

She had never seen Mrs. Raynham so indignant as at this moment, and a great sob shook her. It was hard to stand in a false light to this woman, who had been so kind to her. But the story of Victor's baseness and folly must come from other lips than hers.

"Is Victor risking his life?" she said, faintly. "What do you mean?"

"The dear boy has gone to Hook Dock again; this time on a secret mission. You know as well as I do, it is a dangerous place to be in—and Victor's life may pay the forfeit of his temerity."

"You tremble for his safety?"

"Yes."

"And yet he is with his own father. Surely—"

"It is that man I fear more than anybody else," interrupted Mrs. Raynham, bursting into tears. "Oh, Dora, I can't tell you all the truth. I can't tell you what a devil Miles Rugby has grown to be. But he might murder my son if he should learn his true mission to Hook Dock—might murder him, Dora; just think of that."

She sobbed and moaned so pitifully that the poor girl could not bear it. "Don't grieve like that!" she cried, kissing Mrs. Raynham's hand, then starting for the door with a sudden show of energy. "Don't grieve like that. I will bring Victor back to you, safe and well. I promise to bring him back."

Mrs. Raynham had scarcely heard these last words. Her mind refused to take hold of them, and she had no suspicion of the mad purpose that was being formed by Dora.

But the girl was in dead earnest. She hurried to her own room and dressed in haste. A train left for New York in half an hour. She left the house by a side-door, and reached the station in time to take it.

"For his mother's sake," she kept repeating, over and over to herself. "He is as a dead man to me. I can only restore him to those who have a valid claim to his love. But I will do that. And then, then," wringing her hands and sobbing, "I shall try to forget him, and be a true, faithful wife to his brother Vincent."

It was still broad daylight when she reached Hook Dock. There stood the ruinous old house just as she had seen it once before, with its broken casements and the same weather-stained board on the door, intimating it was to-let.

She had not forgotten the old formula by which she had gained admittance on the occasion of the previous visit. Would it now suffice? She could only make the trial.

Drawing her veil more closely over her face, she gave four distinct taps on the door. She was sure it was a stranger who appeared in answer to the summons. At any rate when he asked "Who's there?" and she had answered "One who knows the ropes," he said, carelessly:

"All right. Come in, little duck of a woman," and he pulled her into the passage.

Afraid to linger in his company, she hurried onward and up the steps until she reached the apartment which seemed to be the general rendezvous of the desperate characters who frequented the place.

Two or three men only were present in the room. "Who's this?" said one of them, roughly. "Throw up your veil, pretty one, and let's have a peep at your face."

Dora shrank from him in terror. She glared all round the room panting for breath. The man was coming nearer and nearer, and there was no one to whom she could appeal.

"Heaven help me," she shrieked, and made a rush for the nearest door.

It opened readily enough. But the two men were upon her the instant she reached it. They caught her in their arms, where she struggled and panted like a startled fawn.

All three were in a long passage. Even while struggling fiercely with her captors, something caused Dora to glance down the passage.

An unexpected sight met her bewildered gaze. Victor himself was there, only a few yards away, grappling with Miles Rugby in a deadly embrace.

A startled cry rose to her lips. "Oh my love, my life!"

She forgot everything save the peril of her lover, and her whole heart spoke in that cry. He heard it; she saw him turn, wrench himself clear of his antagonist's hold, totter toward her a few step, and then fall like a dead man on the floor.

"Oh, my God! they've killed him!" she shrieked, and struggled more fiercely than ever in the arms that held her fast.

There was a minute's silence. Then Miles came up the passage, pale and trembling.

"Is it you?" he snarled, peering into the girl's face, and seeming to comprehend the truth in a moment. "What, in the foul fiend's name, brought you here again?"

She glared at him, and opened her lips. But only one word fell from them.

"Murderer!"

Miles recoiled as from a blow, and muttered a fearful curse. "You've sealed your own fate, you vixen, in coming here a second time," he said, between his teeth.

Then he stepped quickly to one side, opened a door leading to the left, and said to the men:—

"Bring the girl in here."

They obeyed. Dora found herself thrust into a small apartment which had a single window protected by stout iron bars.

She had barely time to look around when the door was closed and locked, and she was left alone.

She fell in a heap on the floor in a sort of stupor induced by the agony and fright she had endured.

At last, after many weary minutes, this passed away. She rose with difficulty, and staggered to the window.

It was now nearly dark. But she saw that the window looked out upon a back-yard shut in by high walls.

Suddenly she saw three figures steal across this yard, bearing a body between them. They passed through a gate where, she was sure, she saw a carriage waiting.

Presently one of the figures came back alone.

Then the poor girl dropped on her knees and cried aloud to Heaven. Of course the senseless man who had been carried out, was Victor.

But was he alive or dead?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HONORIA'S TRUMP CARD.

Mrs. Raynham felt that she might have been a trifle harsh with Dora, after their brief interview was over. But she could hardly help being so, while she carried so sore a heart in her bosom.

"After the disclosures that took place at Hook Dock, the foolish girl can't suspect Victor of having stolen the five thousand dollars," she thought. "What then has come between them? Perhaps a lover's quarrel that can be made up without difficulty. I will speak to Dora about it to-morrow."

So she dismissed the subject from her mind, or only thought of it now and then to wonder why Dora had betrothed herself to one brother so soon after breaking faith with the other. Somehow, she did not quite like the look of that.

She kept her room all that evening, and therefore did not learn of Dora's absence.

At breakfast the next morning she met only Vincent. He looked paler than usual, and there were dark rings underneath his eyes.

"What has come over us all?" he said, impatiently. "The house is gloomy as a monastery, of late. Victor has taken himself off, and nobody tries to be sociable now. I spent last evening in the drawing-room quite alone."

"Where was Dora?"

"In her own apartment, I suppose."

"She will come down to breakfast, of course."

But the breakfast-hour passed, and no Dora made her appearance. Mrs. Raynham grew alarmed at that, and sent one of the maids to make inquiries.

The girl soon returned. "Miss Desmond must have gone away," she reported. "Her bed has not been slept in, and one of her travelling-dresses is missing from the wardrobe."

On hearing that, Vincent sprang to his feet, and a muttered imprecation fell from his lips. His mother stared at him in dire perplexity. But even then no suspicion of the truth dawned upon her mind.

"What has happened?" she asked. "Why should the girl go away without saying a word to anybody?"

Her deep amazement proved how entirely Dora's wild promise of the day before to "bring Victor back" had escaped her memory.

Something in Vincent's face as she asked the question turned her cold. She shuddered, hesitated a moment, and finally opened her lips to speak again.

At this instant there came a ring at the door-bell. She drew a deep breath of relief. "News of Dora, of course," she murmured, glancing eagerly toward the door.

At last it opened, and a servant ushered in a lady.

It was Honoria Vance.

She was frightfully pale—this strange but marvellously beautiful woman. Even her lips had lost their luscious redness. She trembled a little, but there was a resolute glitter in her burning black eyes—a glitter that told one observer at least how dangerous was her mood.

Mrs. Raynham started back a pace or two at sight of her. "Miss Peyton," she said, recognizing her face, and calling her by the only name she had ever heard applied to her.

Victor came quickly to her side. "I beg your pardon," he said. "This lady's name is Miss Vance."

Mrs. Raynham stared. Honoria looked from mother to son, and then a scornful smile curled her lip.

"I beg *your* pardon," she said to Vincent. "You are no nearer the truth than your mother. I am Honoria Raynham."

"What?" gasped Mrs. Raynham.

Honoria repeated what she had said.

"I do not understand you," faltered Mrs. Raynham. "If you belong to our family it is strange I never heard the fact mentioned. My husband had only one near relative, and you cannot be his child."

The beautiful Jezebel smiled, and turned her head. "Don't be too sure of that," she said.

"If you *are* child of this man of whom I have spoken, why have you passed under so many other names?"

"You mistake," Honoria returned, with dangerous calmness. "A wedding-ring gave me a right to the name of Raynham."

The distressed lady looked at her unexpected visitor a moment, then fixed her gaze upon Vincent. Her quandary was deeper than ever. And worse than all the rest, she observed that Vincent shrank away from her and changed color.

"Why don't you speak to me?" she said, sharply. "Why don't you tell me what this woman means?"

The young man only hid his face.

"*I* will tell you what I mean," Honoria hissed, vindictively. "You are no better than I am, that your feelings should be regarded rather than mine. I tell you a wedding-ring gave me a right to the name of Raynham; and here it is," thrusting her hand before Mrs. Raynham's face so that she could see the glitter of a jewel on the marriage-finger. "Now shall I tell you who placed the ring there?"

"Yes, you—may tell—me."

"Your favorite son, Victor."

"Ah, just Heaven! It is a lie! I cannot believe it! I will not."

She recoiled, wringing her hands wildly. "Why don't you contradict this base impostor to her face, Vincent?" she cried, after a moment's struggle with herself. "For your brother's sake I command you to contradict her; or else turn her from these doors."

"Look at him," said Honoria, gnashing her teeth. "I defy him to do either. Can't you see by his face that he knows I have spoken the truth?"

"Is it so?"

Vincent came slowly and reluctantly toward them, avoiding Honoria's significant glance, and keeping his own gaze fixed on his mother's face.

"I cannot deny Miss Vance's story," he said; "would to Heaven I could. But facts are stubborn things, my mother; and I have known all for some days past."

"You have known, and still have kept it from me?"

"How could I tell you of my brother's fault?"

"True, true."

There was silence in the room. Mrs. Rayn-

ham sat perfectly still on the spot where she had been stricken dumb by this unexpected disclosure. She breathed more heavily than usual, and her face was frightfully pale. But she gave no other sign by which the two watching her so closely could tell what she suffered.

At last she raised her head. "Does Dora know of this?" she asked.

Vincent answered, "She does."

"Ah, ah! It is all clear enough to me now. I no longer wonder that she broke faith with Victor."

Another long silence. Then Honoria went up to her and spread out a paper on the table near which she sat.

"My marriage certificate, madam," giving a little nod of triumph. "Look at it, if you please. You will see it is dated in 1867 when Victor was at school in Longdown."

Mrs. Raynham pushed aside the paper, and instead of looking at it, glanced straight into the fair, false face leaning toward her from the other side of the table.

"What do you intend to do, now that you have come here and made this disclosure?" she asked.

"I shall take the place of which I have been defrauded so long!" Honoria answered with a flash of anger. "I shall remain here at Roundwood as Victor's wife, if he is living, and as his widow, if he be dead."

Mrs. Raynham winced a little, but said with a dignity that became her well:

"Be it so. I will order the maids to prepare you a room directly."

She rose up and walked unsteadily to the door. Vincent followed her as far as the hall. "God help us," she cried then, kissing him almost wildly, though her eyes were dry. "God help us!"

And then she added, in the next breath:

"Dora's absence is explained now, Vincent. She could not endure the agony and shame of this affair. She has fled the house, and will never come back here again."

The young man caught her words and stamped his foot angrily.

"She shall come back," he said between his teeth, "though I search to the ends of the earth to find her."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Helena Macdonald;

OR,

THE BRIDE'S SACRIFICE.

CHAPTER XX.

Come, madness! come with me, senseless death!
I cannot suffer this! Here, rocky wall,
Scatter these brains, or dull them!—*De Montford.*

About an hour before the storm burst upon the island, Charles Vaughan, the victim of his own diabolical passions, reached it unseen and unobserved.

"You will await my return here," he said, as he was moving away. "I must be back in Glenleith before morning."

"Don't know 'bout that," said the boy who had taken him over; "there's an awful storm rising, but if you ain't afeared to venture I ain't."

Mr. Vaughan glanced at the dark, sullen sky; but what was the storm without compared with the storm within? Leave the island he *must* before the morning, so he replied—

"I must go back, let it storm as it will. You can remain here, sheltered under these rocks, till I come back."

And wrapping his cloak around him, he moved swiftly away, and concealed himself behind some overhanging rocks to await the result.

The spot where he stood commanded a view of the sea on all sides; and, therefore, when in the deepening gloom, some hours after, he saw a boat approach the isle, containing the form of a woman, he had not a single doubt as to who that woman was.

Oh, the demoniac look that his face wore at that instant! His face, upturned to the bleak light, was that of a fiend.

Blinded by his passions, he did not observe, as in a calmer moment he might have done even in the gloom, the difference between this tall figure and that of his wife. He only saw a woman landing on the isle, springing up the rocks, and disappearing in the darkness—and who but Fanny would have ventured to the isle that stormy night?

When the night fell in more than Egyptian darkness, accompanied by wind, lightning, and rain, he made his way blindly through it all to the trysting-place; and, sheltered behind a friendly rock, he crouched down like a panther waiting for its prey.

"She will not come in this storm—she cannot; you will wait in vain," said the voice of reason, trying faintly to make itself heard.

"She will come—she will!" said jealousy; "she has braved the storm to come to the island, and, though fire should fall from Heaven, she will keep her tryst. Wait! wait! and you will have your revenge."

And the demon voice conquered.

Meantime, how went the night in the widow's cot?

When, wet, dripping, soaked through, Fritz reached the cottage, his first care was to change his wet clothes, and seat himself at the table, where a smoking supper awaited him.

Mrs. Ben held up her hands in wonder and amazement when she heard that Helena had braved all that furious storm to come to the isle.

"The girl must be clean crazy!" she ejaculated, "to venture on the stormy sea such a night. I do wonder, though, what brought Miss Helena here to-night."

"Dunno," said Fritz, speaking with his mouth full of cake; "she was talking sort o' crazy in the boat. Perhaps she thought that Mr. Clinton was here."

Jessie, whose white fingers were, as usual, flying busily, as she plied her needle, suddenly flushed to the temples, and then grew paler than before. *She* knew what had brought Helena to the island, though she had hardly fancied she would have ventured out in such a storm.

"Oh! I wish it had been clear to-night," she thought, lifting her head, and listening anxiously to the howling tempest.

Evan, true to his promise, had faithfully delivered Clinton's note to Jessie, unobserved. But would *he* come in all this storm?

Some vague rumor had reached her ear that Miss Macdonald, the beauty and heiress, was soon to be the bride of Herbert Clinton. She did not believe it—it was too monstrous, too dreadful—the bare possibility of such a thing was maddening. But Helena loved him, and might cherish hopes that could not be realized; and Jessie felt it her duty, despite her promise, to put an end to all these hopes, once and forever, by proclaiming their marriage. Therefore, she had seized the first opportunity, and sent the note before mentioned by Captain Macdonald.

"Well," said the voice of Mrs. Ben, at this instant breaking her revery, as she stopped her wheel with a jerk, and looked sharply into Jessie's face. "I would like to know what's got into you to-night. Here I've asked you three blessed times to hand me that there gownd, and you don't mind me no more than if I was the cat. S'pose it's the latest fashion not to answer your elders when they speak to you. What is the matter with the girl?"

"I didn't hear you," faltered Jessie, turning scarlet. "My head aches. Please excuse me; I didn't mean to offend."

"Better go to bed, then, if your head aches. Time we was all in bed, for that matter. No use sittin' up a wastin' of candles, when we can get up airly in the morning jist as well. Gemini! how it blows!" said Mrs. Ben, as she slipped the bands of her wheel, and carried it over to its accustomed corner.

Glad of the permission, Jessie arose, and began arranging her bed on the wooden settle in the kitchen, where she slept; and Mrs. Ben, who preferred sleeping by herself, sought her own couch, where, by the combined effects of slight heart and a clear conscience, she was soon in the land of dreams.

Relieved of the presence of the inquisitive old lady, Jessie wrapped herself in her mantle, tied on her hood, and softly opened the door. The storm was at its height, and the sudden entrance of a rush of wind and rain sent all the loose articles lying about whirling through the room.

It was awful to venture out in such a storm; but had the tempest raged twice as wildly, the faithful, loving child-wife would have braved it all to meet him she loved. Exerting all her strength, she closed the door after her, without arousing the sleepers, and quitted the house she was destined never to enter more.

On through the falling rain, the driving wind, the vivid lightning, she plunged, making her way blindly through it all. It was well she knew the road she was traversing, and could pursue her way as well at midnight as at noonday, or she had never been able to follow that tortuous, winding, rocky path.

But, shrinking, and blinded by the rain, at times she was forced to stop, and cover her face in her mantle; and anon, at some more furious blast that would have whirled her away as though she had been a feather, she grasped some projecting rock or tree, to prevent herself from being blown over the crags; but still she toiled on to her destination.

"Will he be there?" she said, wildly. "Oh, if after all he should not come! It seems madness for me to expect him in such a storm; but if he should, it would never do for me to be absent. Oh, saints in heaven, what lightning!" she said, as, pale with terror, she hid her face in her hands.

But there was no time to pause—even now he might be waiting for her on the beach; and still on through night and rain and storm she pressed, until at last, drenched, dripping, and totally exhausted, she gained the wet, slippery beach.

Half dead with cold and exhaustion, she sank on a rock, and cowered beneath the pitiless blast. The dull booming of the waves near sent a thrill of nameless awe and horror into her very soul.

She could not long sit there exposed to the peltings of the storm; so, wrapping her mantle still more closely around her, she rose with a shiver, and strove to pierce through the thick darkness in search of that loved form.

In vain! The gloom of Hades could not be deeper than that which enveloped every object.

But at that instant there came a flash of lightning, illuminating for a single instant, with a blue, unearthly glare, the bleak, slippery shingles, and revealing the black, heaving sea, with its foam-crested billows—nothing more! As far as she could strain her eyes, no living thing but herself stood on the shore.

"Oh! why does he not come?" was her heart's agonized cry. "Does he not know, in spite of storm and tempest, I am awaiting him here?"

Another flash of lightning, revealing the dark, deserted beach, the wildly-shrieking ocean, and a pair of gleaming, serpent-like eyes, watching from behind a rock—revealing the slight, delicate form of a female standing alone on the shore.

"Oh, he will not come! I know it! Shall I stay here longer, or shall I go home?" thought Jessie, in an agony of doubt.

Still another blue, lurid blaze of flame. And now, looking up, she uttered a cry of joy, for the tall figure of a man wrapped in a cloak was seen descending the rocks, coming toward her.

"Oh, he is here! he is here!" was her joyful cry. "Dearest, dearest Herbert! I knew you would come!"

And springing forward, she threw herself into his arms.

He did not speak—he did not move—only he drew a step back, and folded his arms over his breast.

"Dearest Herbert? I feared you would not come; but, oh! I am so glad you are with me once more!"

And her encircling arms clasped him closer, while her sunny head sank on his breast.

With the storm within and the storm without, he heard not, heeded not the name of *Herbert*. But another flash of Heaven's fire showed him a slight, slender form, with the shining golden hair of his faithless wife.

And now for the first time she noticed his strange silence, and lifted up her sweet face in surprise, saying—

"What is the matter? Why do you not speak to me? What have I done? Oh, I am so sorry if I have angered you. What, what have I done? Oh, indeed I love you more than life!"

His teeth closed together with a galvanic snap, his eyes were like two living coals set in a ghastly skull, and his hand clutched something within the folds of his cloak with a convulsive grasp.

And still she clung to him, and still he maintained that strange silence.

"Tell me what I have done? Speak to me, or I shall die!" she cried out, in anguish and terror. "Oh, indeed, I love you better than any one in the world! I would die sooner than offend you."

"Die, then," fairly shrieked the maddened man; "die, since your own lips have proclaimed your guilt!"

And clutching her fiercely by the throat, he plunged the hidden knife into her side.

One piercing, terrific shriek, and she sank, writhing, quivering at his feet in mortal agony. And the wretched maniac above her, unable to speak, or move, or think, with distending eyeballs, glazing eyes—his ghastly face like that of the dead—his trembling hands red with her life-blood—stood rooted to the ground, caring not, feeling not the furious storm now.

Was she dead? Would that wild, appalling shriek be repeated? He listened, palsied with horror. Naught met his ear but the shrieking of the warring elements.

Just at that instant there came a blaze of lightning, as though Heaven and earth were on fire, and he beheld that little, child-like form lying stiff and rigid at his feet, the head fallen back; the blue lips parted, as if from them the quivering soul had taken its flight; the arms lying limp and lifeless by her side; the bright golden hair, half shading the cold, beautiful face, on which the pitiless rain wildly beat.

All his jealousy, his hatred, passed away with that pitiful sight, and the passionate love, the adoring worship his heart had just felt for her, returned like a swelling flood. The memory of the time when she had left home and friends and all, to fly with him—when she had first been his loved and loving wife, bright, happy, and beautiful—came back in overwhelming force. And now she was dead—dead by his hand!

"Oh, Heavens! what have I done? Oh, my wife, my wife—my beautiful murdered Fanny! Oh, what have I done? My love, speak—look up—live for me once more! Oh, she is dead, and I am her murderer!"

And with a shriek of agony, the wretched man fell prone on his face beside her.

But now there came another sound, more terrible than all else. Swollen by the heavy rain, the sea was rising on the island!

With the roar of a beast of prey, the furious waves, lashing themselves into foam, rushed upon the shore. It recalled the miserable assassin from his frenzy of despair, and with the instinct of self-preservation that never deserts us while life remains, he seized the cold, stark form, and fled wildly up the beach, bearing it in his arms.

But just then—had the infernal regions yielded up their hosts to pursue him?—a human form, having the figure of a woman, revealed by the quick flashes of lightning, came flying toward him, her uncovered hair streaming in the gale, her wild eyes glaring with the fires of madness.

Her eyes fell upon him and his bleeding burden at the same instant, and throwing up her arms, with a piercing cry of "Murder! murder!" that pealed high above the raging of the storm, she fled in the direction of Macdonald Castle.

That appalling cry, that awful apparition, drove the last spark of reason from his maddening brain. With a perfect yell of terror, he flung his lifeless burden on the rocks, and fled, as if pursued by the avenger of blood, from the spot.

CHAPTER XXI.

Between the enacting of a fearful deed
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like the phantasma of a hideous dream.
—*Shakspeare.*

With blood on his hands, with horror, insanity, and wildest woe in his eyes; and, oh, worse, far worse, with the dreadful mark of Cain branded indelibly on his brow, the wretched man fled—hating himself, his crime, the earth and Heaven—only longing to fly far away, where human eyes would never more behold him, clutching his breast with his pale, talon-like fingers, as if to tear hence his agony and remorse.

On he went—flying over rocks, and chasms, and uprooted trees—on, on, still on, unable to stop, till at length he sank exhausted beneath a huge pile of rocks some distance from the shore. The waves were wildly, madly cannonading against the rocks, as if they would tear their way to where he lay, and bodily engulf him; but he heard nothing save that unearthly cry of "Murder!" saw nothing but the cold, still face and lifeless form of his murdered wife.

Midnight approached, and the storm began to abate, the rain ceased to fall, and the mighty waters began sullenly retreating from the shore.

But still the stricken man lay prone on the ground, dead to everything above, around, about him, with that gnawing, unutterable remorse at his heart.

Another hour waned. The clouds rolled away, the lightning had ceased, the wind abated its fury, and the troubled, heaving waves were slowly calming down. And, suddenly, from behind a cloud broke forth the moon—brightly, gloriously, grandly shedding her soft, silvery radiance over sea and land.

For the first time, the murderer ventured to look up. Morning was near at hand, and must not find him at the scene of the tragedy.

"What is to be done next?" was the thought that arose through all the distracting rush of grief, horror, and remorse. "She will be missed; and if I am found here I shall be taken for the murderer, and—"

And a shuddering spasm closed the sentence.

He rose to his feet, but tottered so he could hardly walk; and, as if hurried by some uncontrollable impulse, took the road leading to the beach.

He reached the spot where, in his first wild impulse of terror, he had dropped the body; but far beyond that the waves had risen, and the lifeless form was gone—swept away by the boiling waters.

A groan, so deep and hollow that it seemed rending his very heart, broke from his lips at the sight—his murdered Fanny had found a grave in the sea.

A footstep behind met his ear, and in terror he turned to fly; but seeing only the half-witted boy who had brought him over, he restrained himself, and stood still.

Even through the dull mist of his clouded brain, the ghastly face before him struck terror to the boy's soul. And well it might; for with that white, death-like face, branded with a look of unutterable horror, those ashen lips, sunken, collapsed cheeks, glazing eyes, shuddering form, and trembling hands, he looked like a corpse galvanized for a moment into a hideous semblance of life.

The words he had been about to say died on the boy's lips, and with distended mouth, and eyes all agape with surprise and fear, he stared at him in stupid bewilderment.

"Well?" came at length from Vaughan's lips, in a voice so hollow that it seemed to issue from an empty coffin.

"What's the matter?" said the boy. "Frightened by the storm?"

"What do you want?" again came in deep, husky tones from his livid lips.

"Why, you said you wanted to get back afore morning, and we can start now. The sea runs pretty high yet, but there ain't no danger."

Like a man in a dream Vaughan passed his hand across his brow, as though to clear away a cloud. Again the idea of self-preservation, "the first law of nature," rose before him, overcoming every other feeling. His eyes wandered mechanically to the fatal spot, and he turned away with a shudder.

"Can we reach Glenleith before morning breaks?" he asked.

"I think so," was the answer, "if we start now."

"Do you think there is any danger?"

"Don't think there is; you'll be apt to be sea-sick, though," said the boy. "Waves run pooty high; but what makes you speak so hoarse, and look so scared, as if you'd seed a ghost? P'raps you did, too; they say there's one up in that old house there."

"Let us go," said Vaughan, unheeding his words, as he folded his cloak closer around him, and started in the direction of the boat.

The boy shuffled after him to where the boat now lay high and dry on the strand, requiring the united efforts of both to launch her into the water.

"Precious hard time I had of it all night in the storm," said the lad, as he took the oars; "got soaked right through; and wasn't there some thunder. I never wants to be out such a night again."

The boat was pitching and tossing wildly on the heaving waves, threatening each moment to capsize; but Vaughan, lost to all sense of personal danger, sat striving to dispel the cloud of horror and remorse from his mind, and answer the momentous question: "What is to be done next?" His wife would assuredly be missed. How was her sudden disappearance to be accounted for? It seemed probable that none but Captain Macdonald knew of her intended visit to the isle, save the boy who had brought her over; and, in waiting on the dark, dangerous beach, in such a wild tempest—with the advancing tide rising on the shore—what would be more natural than that she had been accidentally overtaken, and swept away by the rapid rising of the waves?

Then came another thought: how was he to account for his absence during the night? It seemed scarcely probable that his wife had told any of the inmates of the parsonage of their angry parting and his brutal blow—she had too much pride for that—and they could easily be made to believe that sudden business had called him away. Doubtless, they would think it strange he had not told them before going; but as he had already acquired a character for eccentricity from his gloomy reserve, it would be readily set down to that. He had business at Craig's End—he would go there, remain for some hours, and return to Glenleith before night.

His plans thus rapidly arranged, he proceeded to carry immediately into execution. Lifting his head, he said, briefly—

"I have changed my mind. I will not go to Glenleith. Take me to Craig's End."

Regarding him for a moment with his customary vacant stare, the boy, without a word, turned the boat in the direction indicated.

The rising sun was reddening the orient before they reached Craig's End. And Charles Vaughan having paid the boy, dismissed him, and sauntered about the town until the business of the day would begin.

Gradually the streets began to fill; men on their way to their daily labor passed him in groups, now and then stopping to gaze in wonder at the tall, muffled figure pacing through the streets, as though he were hastening for life or death. He noticed this scrutiny at last, and slackened his rapid strides, muttering inwardly—

"This will never do. I must not allow my feelings to carry me away thus. I must be calm, or I may be suspected. Nothing but coolness will save me now."

Turning down the collar of his cloak, and pushing up his hat, that the cool morning air might fan his feverish brow, he turned in the direction of the Glenleith Hotel.

The door had just been opened, and the rooms had that dreary, uncomfortable look large, lonely rooms always wear in the gray dawn of morning. A yawning waiter, half asleep, passed him, staring with lack-lustre eyes, as though he had seen a ghost, and a slip-shod, frizzle-headed chambermaid uttered a faint scream as her eyes fell on his haggard face and wet garments.

"Let me have a private room immediately," was his command to the waiter.

"Yes, sir; this way, sir," said the man, recovering from his surprise at the entrance of so strange-looking an individual.

He ushered him into a neat, comfortably-furnished room, and Vaughan threw himself into a chair, and said—

"Light a fire here, and bring me up a cigar and a cup of strong coffee."

"A fire, sir?" said the waiter, surprised at such a demand in summer.

"Yes, sir, a fire; did I not speak plain enough?" said Vaughan in a tone that sent the man hastily from the room.

With his garments soaked through he began to feel cold and chilled, though in the fever of his mind up to the present he had not observed it. A fire was soon kindled, and spreading his cloak and outer clothes before it to dry, he threw himself on the couch to try and lose the maddening recollection in sleep.

Totally exhausted by fatigue and excitement, he succeeded at last, but only to react in his dreams the catastrophe of the preceding hours.

Again he saw the lifeless form of his murdered wife lying stark and rigid at his feet; then would flit before his horror-stricken gaze the ghostly apparition of the isle, with its wild, terrific shriek of "Murder!" then the gallows, the coffin, the hangman, with all the fearful paraphernalia of the felon's death, would rise in ghastly array before his distorted imagination. He could feel the very rope encircling his neck, and by some strange contradiction his wife, bright beautiful, and happy as he had first known her, stood smilingly adjusting it, and stranger still, he felt no surprise at seeing her there. He heard the fatal signal given, the drop sliding from beneath his feet, and, with a shriek, he sprang up, the cold perspiration starting out from every pore.

"Great Heaven! am I never to lose the recollection of that last fearful night, and my more awful crime? Oh, for the fabled waters of Lethe to drown recollection! Must I forever go through the world with this mark of Cain—this red-hot brand of murder on my face as well as on my soul? Saints in Heaven, should this dream prove true!"

The guilty man paused, while his whole frame shook, and his teeth chattered as though he had the ague.

"And yet it need not, unless this paltry cowardice of mine betrays me," he again cried, starting wildly up, and pacing through the room. "How many murderers walk in the open sunshine, in the broad face of day, through the very heart of our most crowded cities, with impunity? It only requires nerve, courage, boldness to face the worst, and I can defy Satan himself and all his hosts. Others have committed murder before me, without any provocation to excuse them, and it troubled them not. Why, then, should I, who only acted in vindication of my wounded honor—and if ever murder is excusable, surely it was in my case? Why should I tremble and shrink from my very shadow? Courage, coward soul! The dreams and fancies of a disordered brain will pass away with time. When this affair in some degree blows over, I will hasten to Paris—to Vienna—and in the excitement and turmoil of a great city forget the miserable past. Courage, Charles Vaughan! Thou hast begun a desperate game, and all thy boldness is required to carry thee through! Yes, I will put a bold face on it, and dare the worst. And now Satan—for on thee alone dare I call now—help me in this extremity, if ever thou didst help me before!"

He paused before the glass with clenched hands and teeth, and almost started to see the wild, fierce look his ghastly face wore. His long elf locks fell in wild disorder over his face and neck, and added to the haggard pallor of his countenance.

"This craven face will never do," he said; "I must compose it. And this dishevelled hair must not hang thus disordered. She used to twine it round her fingers once," he said, the look of agonizing sorrow and remorse coming back; "but that time long ago passed away. I must not think of it more—let me only think of this man for whose love she forgot she was already a wife."

The thought did bring a sort of fierce composure. Brushing back the heavy black hair off his face and brow, he threw on his now dry cloak, lit one of the cigars that lay on the table, and then rang a peal that presently brought up one of the servants.

When the man entered Vaughan was lying back in the pillowy depths of a lounging-chair, his feet extended to the fire, looking as he smoked, or rather trying to look, the very picture of nonchalance. It was a miserable failure after all, as the wildly-gleaming eyes still testified.

"Breakfast," he said, briefly to the bowing waiter.

"Yes, sir. What will you be pleased to have, sir?"

"Anything—coffee—eggs and bacon. I don't care what—only be quick!"

The man disappeared, and presently returned with fragrant coffee, delicious ham, and eggs.

Vaughan seated himself at the table, and drank cup after cup of the strong coffee; but the first morsel he attempted to swallow seemed to choke him.

The grateful beverage soothed his excited nerves more speedily than all his reasoning and philosophy had done.

Drawing out his watch, and perceiving it was after ten, he arose, put on his hat, and having settled his bill, was about to leave the house, when he was suddenly confronted by Captain Malcolm Macdonald, who came running up the outer steps, laughing at something that had occurred outside.

For one moment the guilty soul of Vaughan quailed before the bold, bright glance of the young captain's eye. For one moment only—the next he looked up and met his gaze with one of deep, sullen hate.

Touching his hat coldly, the young captain passed on, and Vaughan emerged into the street, all his fierce hatred and jealousy returning with fourfold bitterness at the thought of the contrast between them—he himself so ghastly, so pallid, so haggard, and this lover of his dead wife so handsome, dashing, and careless.

"Heaven's worst curses forever light upon him!" he hissed, fiercely. "That he—he who has caused me to do what I have done—should be happy, flattered, and beloved, while I—I whom he drove to madness—should be doomed to a life of torture! They tell us of hell! I doubted its existence once; I do so no longer—for I feel already some of its torments."

And any one, seeing the demoniac look his face wore, would not have doubted his words at that instant. Entering a livery-stable, he hired a horse and gig, and immediately started in the direction of Glenleith.

He dreaded the coming scene, and the false part he would have to act in it; and yet, as if impelled by some inward power, over which he had no control, he whipped and lashed the horse in a sort of frenzy of impatience to be there. On he flew, his horse foaming and reeking with sweat—houses, people, streets, passing with the velocity of a dream, and yet all too slow for the burning, maniac impatience that was consuming him.

He reached Glenleith, and consigning his panting horse to the care of an innkeeper within half a mile of the parsonage, he set out for it at a rapid walk. Ten minutes brought him to it, and in spite of his haste, he paused, as its sober, gray front and green window-shutters rose before him, while a vague thrill of nameless terror shot through him.

It was no time to hesitate now—the worst must be faced at once. Drawing his breath in hard, he approached the door and rang.

The summons was answered by Jane. As he passed into the hall, he encountered Mrs. M'Calmont coming down-stairs. That good lady's pleasant, cheery face wore a look of unusual gravity as she greeted him, that for a moment startled him out of his composure.

"Is my—I wish to see my wife, madam," he managed to say, while every word seemed choking him.

"Your wife is in the parlor, Mr. Vaughan," said Mrs. M'Calmont, gravely, as she held open the door for him to enter, ascribing his evident agitation to a far different cause.

For one moment his wild, maniac eyes were riveted upon her with a look that actually terrified the good minister's wife. Reeling unsteadily, as though he had been suddenly struck a violent blow, he passed her and entered the parlor.

And there, before him on the sofa, supported by pillows, her little pale face looking out from its masses of floating golden hair, with a look of beseeching entreaty to be forgiven, lay she whom he supposed buried for ever under the wild waves. For an instant he stood paralyzed, speechless, with ashen face and dilating eyes. Then the last glimpse of hope and reason fled, and with a terrific cry, that froze the life-blood of the hearers, the wretched man fell senseless on the floor.

CHAPTER XXII.

And she was gone, and yet they breathed,
But not the breath of human life—
A serpent round each heart was wreathed,
And stung their every thought to strife.
—*Byron.*

And how dawned that morn on Macdonald's Castle? How on the widow's cot?

With that appalling shriek, that most terrible of all cries, that unearthly scream of murder ringing in her ears, Helena sprang from her sleepless couch, and while her very heart thrilled with horror, waited for what was to come next.

Through the lonely, silent old house it echoed and re-echoed like a knell of doom; but it was not repeated. She could hear the wild wind rushing through the open door, awakening strange, ghostly noises through the high, empty rooms, but nothing else.

What had happened? What was to be done? Was it only fancy? Had she been dreaming, and was that cry of murder only a delusion, after all?

No, it could not be; for just as she was beginning to think it was only the effect of fancy, she distinctly heard footsteps flying up the stairs—a light, fleet step that paused at her own door.

There it halted, and Helena's heart stood still. It was but for an instant, then the same piercing cry of "Murder!" rang through the lonely house once more, the quick, light footstep flew down the long, winding, staircase again, passed through the echoing hall below, and then the large, heavy front door was slammed to with a violence that made the old house shake, and all was again profoundly still.

In one instant, all the wild, ghostly legends she had ever heard of the old mansion rushed through Helena's mind. Heaven of Heavens! could this be the spirit of some murdered victim returning from its bloody grave to seek for retribution on its murderer? Helena Macdonald, naturally brave, and come of a daring race, was yet, as we know, superstitious, and the terror that mortal man could never have inspired filled her very soul at the thought.

Shaking as with an ague fit, for an instant she crouched upon the floor, her face hidden in her hands, while memory recalled the tale she had once heard of a woman stabbed by one of her dark, fierce forefathers in that very house, whose restless spirit, the legend ran, came when the storm was wildest, and the furious tempest at its height, from her troubled tomb amid the heaving waves to denounce woe on her murderer and on his descendants.

How long she sat she knew not; but the sound of the old clock below, striking in deep, sonorous tones, that echoed startlingly through the silent house—one! two! three!—recalled her once more to life.

That earthly sound brought her once more to herself. She raised her head and looked wildly around. Old Allie lay near her, breathing heavily, and sleeping a deep, dreamless, death-like sleep. The consciousness of companionship—even though that companion was but a poor, helpless old woman—brought renewed courage. Rising, and half ashamed of her superstitious fears, she walked to the window and looked out.

The storm had passed away, and the moon was shining brightly, lighting up with her calm, pale radiance what had so lately been the scene of deepest darkness and wildest storm. Her eyes wandered over the island; all there was still and serene. From thence they strayed over the boundless sea, and suddenly rested on an object that banished all fears of supernatural visitors, and brought with it a new alarm.

It was a boat—a boat that had evidently just put off from the isle, and was rapidly disappearing in the distance.

It held but two persons, she could see that; but what meant this midnight visit, in darkness and storm, to that lonely isle? What terrible deed, under cover of night and tempest, had been perpetrated this night?

She caught her breath quick and short; but now that she feared only earthly dangers and earthly foes, there came with this discovery a deep breath of relief. Some one might still be concealed in the house—some one who indulged in the popular belief that there was money concealed in it somewhere.

There was no time to hesitate—the house must be searched. Evan must be aroused to assist in it. He slept in the opposite wing of the building, and supposing any one to be concealed in the empty rooms, the journey was a hazardous one; but it could not be avoided. Helena grew quite calm in the face of this new danger, and stooping, she shook old Allie by the shoulder to arouse her.

A deep grunt, as the sleeper turned over and fell into a deeper sleep than before, rewarded her exertions.

Pushing open a door leading directly from the kitchen into Evan's sleeping-room, she entered it, and stood beside him. She could not spare time to try to arouse him by ordinary means, so seizing a large pitcher of cold water that stood near, she unceremoniously dashed it in his face, drenching him completely.

The shock aroused him, as well it might; and uttering a fearful yell of mingled rage and terror, Evan sat bolt upright in bed, unable to distinguish anything for the light of the lamp that flashed directly in his eyes.

"Oh," was his first ejaculation, "I'm gaun for to be assassinated without a minute's warning!"

"Hush, hush, Evan, for Heaven's sake! It's only me, your mistress," said Helena, putting one little white hand over his huge mouth. "Get up and dress yourself as quickly as possible, and join me in the kitchen, where I will wait until you come."

And without waiting for the host of questions she saw hovering on his lips, Helena passed out to the kitchen to wait for him.

With teeth chattering, and gasping with terror, Evan proceeded, with trembling fingers, to draw on his clothes. Without waiting to make a very elaborate toilet, he passed out to the kitchen, where Helena stood waiting in a fever of impatience.

"Miss Helena!" he exclaimed, in trembling tones, "what's happened? Are we all goin' to be killed, or anything?"

"Hush! No, I hope not. But—be silent now—I greatly fear there are men concealed in the house somewhere. Hush, I tell you!" she repeated, with a flash of her bright eye that arrested the exclamation of terror on Evan's lips. "This is no time for idle exclamations. I only say I think there may be men here; if there are, your noise will only reveal where we are; if there are not, then there is no occasion for your terror. Come, follow me; we must search the house."

"Oh, Miss Helena, I'm afraid!" said poor Evan, in shivering tones.

"Chut, sir! do you think you will be any safer here? Come, give over your fears, and follow me," said Helena, as she turned toward the hall once more.

"Oh, Miss Helena, don't venture! We'll all be assassinated if you do!"

And poor Evan wrung his hands in mortal terror; while Helena ran from room to room, but, as may be anticipated, finding no one.

"What can this mean?" she thought, "There was certainly some one here to-night, and yet I find everything undisturbed. This is most strange; they must have gone, too, for the house is perfectly still. Oh, what could that cry of murder have meant? That voice and that light, quick step belonged to a woman, most certainly; yet what woman would venture out in such a storm? The girl Jessie would not come, she is too timid—neither was it her voice. What—what can it all mean?"

Suddenly, the recollection of the midnight visitor, the fair, pale woman with the dark, wild hair and eyes, who had bent over the couch of Herbert Clinton the first night he had spent in the lodge, came over it. It must have been that supernatural visitant: and Helena grew for an instant faint and sick at the thought.

Further search in the house was fruitless; but her impatience would not permit her to wait until morning to investigate further. Returning to the kitchen, where Evan was on his knees, alternately groaning, praying, and bemoaning his hard fate, she commanded him to get his hat and come out with her, to see if any traces of intruders could be found on the island.

In vain did Evan begin expostulating. Helena cut it short by threatening him with her brother's future vengeance if he did not instantly obey. There was no help for it; and trembling in every limb the frightened lad reluctantly followed his imperious mistress from the house.

All without was so calm and peaceful—all the more calm and peaceful, contrasted with the wild uproar of the storm a few hours before—that it seemed like sacrilege even to think of deeds of violence in such a spot.

Helena took the path leading in the direction from which the boat had started, but there the waves were breaking with the same monotonous tramp, giving no indication of any one having been there. The tide had now receded sufficiently to allow Helena to walk around the beach; and, tempted by the calm beauty of the night, and feeling a sense of security in the open air, she strolled on until she reached the spot where Vaughan, in his first moment of alarm, had dropped the body of Jessie.

Something caught her eye at some distance farther up, fluttering from a prickly thorn bush, evidently a fragment of dress. Feeling as if she had at last found some clue, she approached the spot, and found it to be a white muslin handkerchief, but almost saturated with blood!

A sensation of horror came over Helena. Had there really been a murder committed there that night? Shrinking from touching it, she was about leaving the spot, when, near one corner, free from the horrible stains that covered the rest, her eye fell on something like a name or initials. Taking the corner with the tips of her fingers, she beheld, marked in full, the name "*Jessie.*"

It was hers, then—Jessie's. What could have brought it there? Had anything happened to her?

"Oh, impossible," thought Helena. "Who is there in the world to whom she is of the slightest importance, living or dead, except, indeed to me? Herbert has gone; she is, in all probability, safely asleep in yonder cottage; and I am only torturing myself by useless fears. I will return to the lodge, and leave to-morrow to unravel this mystery."

So saying, to the great satisfaction of her attendant, who had all this time been cautiously walking behind her, looking fearfully at every tree and rock, and fancying an assassin in their very shadows, Helena turned slowly toward the old hall. On their way they passed the cottage of Mrs. Ben. All was perfectly quiet there; and, mystified and uneasy still, Helena sought her room once more, to wonder and speculate upon the events of the night until morning should dawn.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ A Western genius has an idea which is an idea. He proposes to arrange church seats on pivots, so the devout may more conveniently examine the *toilettes* of the back seats. This device would greatly increase the value of church property, for then all pews would be made alike well-situated, and of equal desirability. With self-sacrifice for the "cause," the inventor has declined to patent his improvement, and it is free to all.

☞ An aged lady in Indiana, who had been blind for fifteen years, woke up the other morning with vision fully restored.

☞ Tais is the way they treat dogs in Norfolk, Va.: "First they are surrounded, then they are impounded, and finally drownded."

☞ The market intelligence of a New York paper chronicles the unpleasantly suggestive fact of an "unexampled activity in cheese."

☞ The women are "going it" in Scotland as well as the United States. At the recent Dundee regatta there was a race for four-oared fishing yawls rowed by fisher-girls. The "Pet Lambs," wearing straw hats and striped bodices, won the race easily. They had previously won the first prize at the Broughty Ferry regatta.

☞ In Minnesota, an Agricultural Fair offers premiums for the three heaviest women.

☞ One hundred thousand trunks were handled and unhandled at Saratoga this summer.

A JUST RETRIBUTION.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CRACK OF DOOM.

For a week Olive kept her place as governess, and then a change came in her affairs. She went to Mrs. Grosvenor's one morning, to perform her daily task. Her employer met her with a very dissatisfied face. "I have received a letter," she said, bidding Olive sit down. "It is from a gentleman calling himself Mario Almont.

Olive flushed up hotly. Was she still to be subjected to his insolent persecutions? "Well," she said, quietly.

Mrs. Grosvenor moved about among the nick-nacks of the parlor uneasily. She hardly knew how to open the conversation to suit herself. "Well," she said, at last; "this gentleman, Senor Almont writes that you were engaged to the man who committed the shocking murder at Westfield some time ago."

"I am engaged to the person who *was arrested* for the crime," answered Olive, quietly, at a loss to understand what relation that had with Mrs. Grosvenor's affairs.

"This Senor Almont writes that there is not, nor has been, the least doubt of this Sherwood's being guilty. Since that is the case, I cannot see how you can still have any sympathy for him."

"I believe him to be innocent," answered Olive, proudly.

"And you still consider yourself engaged to him?" questioned Mrs. Grosvenor.

"I do," answered Olive.

"I—then I think I will dispense with your services, Miss Carhart," said Mrs. Grosvenor, flushing up under Olive's steady gaze. "You see I have a social position to fill, and if I were to keep you in my employment, people would consider that I was doing wrong, that is, people of the society to which I belong. I—I am sorry, Miss Carhart, that I cannot keep you, for I like you, but since you insist on considering yourself under an engagement of marriage with a man who is considered guilty of murder, I think it would be advisable for me to dispense with your services. I shall avoid much *talk*, and not compromise the social standing which I must keep up."

"I understand you," answered Olive, bitterly. "Be assured, madam, *I* will not compromise your social standing." She rose and moved toward the door.

"Here is the money for your week's services," said Mrs. Grosvenor, proffering a bill.

"Thank you," answered Olive, with a cold smile. "I cannot think of taking it. I may have compromised your social standing already. In case I have, you will need your money for a consolation." And then she turned and walked out of the house.

Perhaps you can imagine something of Olive's feelings, as she turned her steps homeward. "If ever a man lived with a demon in his soul, Mario Almont is such a man," she thought. "Not content with turning us out of house and home, he follows me with his hatred, even here, to prevent me from gaining an independent living. Surely, there must come a time when his sins will come up before him to strike him with a sense of his cruelty and his meanness."

One day Kate Ashmore had been out visiting a relative living in the country. On her return she chanced to occupy a seat near a couple of ladies, who, like herself, were returning to the city. They were conversing about some of their friends, and telling how this one was prospering, and that one was falling behind, and some were dead.

"Oh!" cried the younger lady suddenly. "You remember Mary Derwent, don't you?"

"Of course," was the reply. "We used to be quite intimate, you know."

"I had forgotten," said the other. "Did you know that she was insane?"

"Insane!" exclaimed the lady. "You don't mean it?"

"Yes, I do," answered the other. "I saw her a week ago, I went to the asylum with her mother, but she didn't know me."

"How shocking!" The lady's tone was full of pity for her unfortunate friend. "I think I had rather lose a friend by death than have them insane."

"I don't want to visit an insane asylum again," said the other lady, with a shudder. "They had a new patient there. She had tried to get away, and had succeeded in getting out of the house, when she was discovered by a dog, who caught her by the arm, inflicting a severe wound. I saw her. They slipped aside a slide in the door, and I looked through. I forget what her name was. They told me; but she insists that her name is Barbara Gower, and that she is sane. She says a man who feared she would reveal some secret had her shut up there. She told me her story, and implored me to help her. She says she *must* get out by the middle of October, else an innocent man will be hung. She says she knows something which will clear him, but she can't get away, for they insist at the asylum that she is insane. She wanted me to bring physicians and have them examine her. She wanted me to write to her friends and tell them where she was, and even gave me their names. Her story was probably the result of a disordered brain, but it seemed real. How she begged me to help her. I never pitied any one before as I did the poor girl."

Kate heard it all with breathless eagerness. A suspicion of the truth flashed across her mind.

"Excuse me," she said, getting up and coming to the stranger's side, "but I have been listening to your story, and am more interested than you can imagine, because I think it explains the disappearance of a girl whom everybody thought drowned. Will you be so kind as to go over it again, and tell me everything this girl told you?"

The lady narrated her interview with the girl again, and with minute distinctness.

"Was the name of this person, whom she accuses of having placed her in the asylum, Mario Almont?" asked Kate.

"That was the name," answered the lady. "And she used several other names. Sherwood, I think, was the name of the man she wished to free from the suspicion of murder. She said she held the secret of the murder, and no one else knew anything about it except the real murderer himself. Everybody supposed this Sherwood to be guilty. I remember her story because it impressed me with such a sense of reality."

"I think her story *was* real," answered Kate. "There *was* a murder committed at Westfield, which was laid to the charge of a man by the name of Sherwood. He is in jail now, waiting his trial, which takes place next month. Barbara Gower claimed to know who the real murderer was, and agreed to reveal the secret to another person, and a place was appointed for the interview. She never came to meet that person, and her shawl and hat being found near the river, it was supposed she was drowned; at any rate she had disappeared from the neighborhood, and no traces were found of her. You say this girl had been at the asylum about two weeks; that date corresponds with the date of the disappearance of Barbara Gower from Westfield. The Barbara Gower I knew, and the girl you saw, who called herself Barbara Gower, are one and the same. They must be, and I can prove that the girl is *not* insane, and I will do it."

On the fifteenth day of October the session of the Circuit Court began at Westfield. The case of the State *vs.* Sherwood was the second on the docket. The court-room was filled at an early hour to overflowing. The excitement was intense. There were probably not five persons in the whole assembly who had the least doubt of Allyn Sherwood's guilt. Olive and her father took a seat near the prisoner's stand. Lucia Lisle was there, come down to add her testimony against her brother's murderer, she confidently believed. Senor Mario Almont smiled, with a fierce and hateful flash of his eyes at the same time, into Olive's face as he came in. The anticipated verdict of the jury would give the woman before him such a pang as he had not been able to inflict upon her, and he could enjoy it thoroughly. She gave him a cool, disdainful glance, and ignored him after that for a time wholly in a way that stirred him to greater hatred and anger than any fierce, hot words could have done. Kate and Charlie, who had been summoned as witnesses, had not yet arrived.

By and by there was a bustle at the door, and two officers came in leading Allyn Sherwood. He had grown thin and pale since his confinement, but there was not a trace of fear in his face. His glance was proud and full of a consciousness of his own innocence. Olive's face grew full of a great gladness when she saw him. When he had entered the prisoner's seat, she made her way to his side, and put her hand in his, proving her true devotion, her love, and loyalty in the face of the assembled crowd. Tears filled his eyes at this simple act, and he kissed her with a strange tenderness. It might be for the last time.

The trial began. One after another the witnesses were called. The readers of this story know well enough what the testimony was that could be given against Allyn Sherwood, and there is no need to give it here. Mario Almont was very pale when he took the witness stand, and not once could Olive nor Sherwood catch his eye. It was evidently a great relief to him when he had concluded his testimony and could sit down. The testimony of the principal witnesses was almost precisely similar. One corroborated the story of the other. The case against Sherwood looked very black indeed.

It was well into the afternoon when the testimony for the plaintiff was concluded. Then Sherwood was asked to tell his story. My readers know what it was well enough. Probably not one person in that court-room had the least doubt as to how the case would be decided. Those who had doubts about his being guilty felt that so strong and convincing was the evidence against him, that there was not the least possibility of an acquittal. He had no witnesses to corroborate his story, or throw one gleam of softening light on the hard, black shadow of guilt which seemed to wrap itself about him. When he sat down, a murmur of execration and unbelief rose in the crowded room. His story was regarded simply as a most transparent artifice to cover his guilt, and failed entirely of doing so.

It was a warm, Indian Summer day, and the sky began to be overcast with clouds, and indications of a storm made themselves apparent in the close air, and frequent low muttering peals of thunder, very unusual for that season of the year. The court-room was beginning to be enveloped in darkness when the judge concluded his address to the jury. Some one came in at the door and crowded his way through the gathering gloom to the counsel for the prisoner. A whispered, eager conversation took place, and then the lawyer, with a face full of uncontrollable excitement, got up and addressed the judge:

"May it please, your honor, a witness has this moment arrived who has important testimony to give in favor of the prisoner. By your leave I will call her!"

The judge signified his willingness, and then, amid an almost breathless interest, the lawyer called a name which awoke consternation in the breast of one person there, and surprise in all other faces, because it was like calling on the dead.

"*Barbara Gower!*"

"Here!" answered a voice at the door, and Barbara Gower came in with Katherine Ashmore and Charlie; while the crowd stared and doubted, and finally were convinced that it was really the woman they had thought dead and under the river at rest.

Senor Mario Almont started up with a face full of ashy pallor. His eyes flashed with the fury of a tiger's. His features worked with an intense excitement. Barbara Gower came up the aisle and confronted him. A flash of triumph, of revenge, of hatred leaped into her face.

"Ah, Senor Almont, you are baffled, you see," she whispered. She was no longer the weak, loving girl he had known, but a woman, wronged, and full of the avenging power of a Nemesis. Her gaze seemed to scorch him for a moment, then with a cry of rage that was like a wild animal's when it turns upon its enemy, he sprang toward her, with a knife uplifted for its stroke.

But he was not quick enough. Two men, standing by, had seen him draw the knife from its sheath, inside his coat, and, suspecting some intended mischief from his looks, were ready to seize him at the first demonstration. In a moment the weapon was wrested from his grasp, and he was held securely between two officers who were promptly on hand at the scene of this attempted tragedy. Full of baffled, impotent rage, he was forced into a seat, and guarded securely. Barbara Gower took her place on the witness stand, amid a silence only broken by the deep breathing of the crowd, and the low thunder which reverberated through the sky. It was dim and shadowy in the court-room, and the scene was full of strange, dramatic interest. Olive's heart gave a great throb of thankfulness, and she moved her chair close to Allyn's, and put her hand in his, and then prepared to listen to Barbara's story.

Let me tell it as she told it, but in my own words.

On the night of the murder, she had expected Almont to visit her. She started out, after dark, along the path by which he usually came and went between the Elms and the Gower farm, thinking to meet him, but she did not. She kept on until she reached the grounds near the house, and glided about in the shadows of the shrubbery, hoping he would come out. She waited for some time. Then a man came out of the house, and she recognized Brent Lisle. He came near where she was standing. Not wishing to be discovered, and not daring to retreat for fear of attracting attention, she crouched down behind some shrubbery. As she did so, she heard steps coming up the path from the main road. The newcomer proved to be Allyn Sherwood. He met Brent Lisle, and they talked together for some time. Sherwood showed him a pistol which he had that day bought; a new kind of one. Together they examined it, and Sherwood laughingly remarked that it would be easy for one of them to put an end to the other's life by merely pulling the trigger. Suddenly Sherwood said he had lost a letter, and started off to find it. As he passed her, crouching in the shadow, he fell, and the pistol was flung from his hand by the vehemence of his fall. He groped about for it a moment, and then gave up the search and went on to look for his letter, while Brent Lisle remained standing where he had stood when Sherwood left him. She saw a figure glide along in the shadow, saw it stoop and lift something from the leaves near where Sherwood had lost his pistol, and then there was a flash, a report, and Brent Lisle fell, with an awful cry upon his lips. The assassin threw the pistol from him, and ran in a roundabout way to the house, and clambered up by the means of a great vine running up the veranda pillars to the open window of a room in the second story, through which he entered the house. Frightened half out of her senses, she had fled from the scene by a by-path, and had passed Allyn Sherwood as he came running toward the scene of the tragedy, unseen by him.

"And the man who committed the deed?" questioned the lawyer—"was—"

"*The man who murdered Brent Lisle was Mario Almont!*"

For a moment the silence of death was in the room. Then a murmur ran through the assembly; some one called out for cheers for Sherwood, and a deafening shout rang out through the close and sultry air.

"Oh, Allyn! you are saved!"

Olive whispered it to a hardly comprehending man. The sudden transition from darkness to the daylight of deliverance was almost too much for him to bear, and he doubted if he was not dreaming. "You are saved, Allyn. Don't you understand?" she cried, and kissed him, great happy tears running down her cheeks. "You are saved, and I was just as sure of your innocence before as I am now." He did not answer, for no words were forcible enough to tell how thankful he was. He only caught her to his bosom, and held her there as though nothing should henceforth take her from him. Barbara Gower had given him back, under the goodness of God, his unstained name, and next to that he prized the woman who seemed given back to him when the grave was yawning between them. He counted her dearer than the life of which he had new lease.

Mario Almont had listened with a strange and apathetic indifference on his face. He felt that the game was played out, and he had lost. He realized that he had planned and schemed in vain. To get a rival out of the way that he might win the woman he loved, he had taken a human life, and thrown the crime upon that rival's shoulders. And he had not won the woman for whom he had lost his soul. And now the crime came home to him, and he felt that all his plans had been of no avail. In the very hour of his triumph, retribution had overtaken him. He felt stunned—stupefied. Before he was aware of what was going on he was in the charge of two officers, and under arrest; and when he gave his attention to what was transpiring he heard Kate Ashmore telling how she had chanced to hear the conversation on board the train, which led to the discovery of Barbara Gower, whom everybody supposed dead; how she had procured a lawyer and a physician, and gone to Dr. Andry's asylum, and had forced him, under threat of appealing to the State authorities, to grant them an interview with Barbara, whom the physician pronounced of sound mind. The certificates of the two physicians were found to be forgeries, as there were no physicians of that name. Threatened with exposure, by both the legal fraternity and the profession, Dr. Andry had given up his patient at last, and they had arrived just in time.

Allyn Sherwood was formally acquitted, and the crowd broke up. The storm was coming up swiftly, and the thunder shook the building. Vivid flashes of lightning lit up the scene with unearthly radiance.

As the two men having charge of Mario Almont reached the door on their way with him to the jail, he broke from them and dashed out into the darkness; as he did so, a flash of lightning lit up the place with the glare of noonday, and its electric fire struck a tree standing by the court-house, shivering it to atoms. Almont had reached the tree as the electric fluid flashed down its trunk. It seemed to wither him. He stood for a moment, then staggered and fell. They ran and lifted him up, and bore him back into the house *dead!* The crack of doom had not even then died completely away, but was rumbling in the distance.

A strange awe fell upon the crowd. It seemed as if God had taken vengeance into his own hand.

Later that evening a party of several persons assembled in the hotel parlor. Of course the hero of the party was Allyn Sherwood. Happy and thankful, but grave and very thoughtful, he acknowledged the congratulations which his friends showered upon him. Olive stood beside him, her face radiant with joy.

Lucia Lisle gave him her hand and asked him to forgive her for believing that he had caused her brother's death.

"I do not wonder that you thought so," he answered, "circumstances were so dark against me that I wonder there were *any* who could still have faith in my innocence." He smiled at Olive, and held out both his hands to Kate, who came up just then. "I cannot thank you enough for what you have done," he said. "If it had not been for you, Barbara Gower would never have come to tell her story and set me free."

"If it had not been *for God*, rather," said Kate.

"To you, *under* God, then," he said. "I thank Him for such friends as you are, and you for the way in which you have proved your friendship."

"We are always glad to work for those we love," she said, her eyes full of tears.

And Allyn Sherwood, with a man's blindness, failed to see what Olive's clear eyes saw—that to the woman before him he was something dearer than most women count their friends.

"Where is Barbara?" asked Mr. Carhart.

"She has gone to her grandparents," answered Olive, "she was anxious to get away from the excitement, and rest, poor girl. With all she has passed through, and her trouble, she is pretty well worn out. It almost made me shudder to see the fire of her hatred for Almont flash in her eyes when she answered the lawyer's question. She had *cause* to hate him, if any one did. She has had her revenge, and God has taken the rest into his own hands."

"God has been very good to us, darling," Allyn whispered, as he drew Olive closer to him. And then he stooped and kissed her tenderly, and a silence fell upon the little group.

By and by Allyn spoke.

"If Brent were here!" he said, and his eyes were full of tears. "He was my friend, and I loved him. Poor Brent!"

But Brent Lisle, sleeping in his low and narrow grave, away from din and discord, was better off than many are who live.

And here we leave them, with sad and happy thoughts, with love for the living, and regret for the dead; trusting that the future may bring them happiness, and that life may be to them what all of us would have it be to us, if our fondest hopes were granted.

THE END.

VICTORIA.

Stanley's Visit to the Queen—How to Address Royalty.

A London letter to the Boston Advertiser, speaking of Stanley's promised visit to the Queen, says:—

"Mr. Stanley will find the Queen very amiable and fond of conversation. Not long ago Her Majesty asked that some remarkable paintings by an artist might be sent to Windsor Castle for a day or two, that she might have the pleasure of seeing them. While they were there, a hint was given to the artist, who had remained in town, that the Queen would like to hear him describe the singular and exceptional circumstances under which they were painted; but genius is sometimes timid, and the man who did not shrink from the discomforts and dangers of the Arctic regions, preferred, it is said, not to face royalty on the slopes at Windsor Castle. Mr. Stanley, I need not observe, has conquered all weaknesses of that sort. I am sure he will acquit himself well—avoiding the extremes of over-confidence and undue modesty. Some people have been reluctant to meet the Queen from a want of familiarity with the forms of speech which etiquette directs them to observe. They have a notion that the words 'Your Majesty' must often be used, and perhaps they dislike the phrase. Such persons, when their impressions are known, are assured by friendly officials that the Queen prefers the term of 'Madam'—not unseldom abbreviated, I believe, into 'Ma'am,' after the English habit, by those who know her—to any other mode of address. The favored interviewer may use the words 'Your Majesty,' in the first instance, but afterward the simple phrase will do. There are people who pester English noblemen by the constant use of the words 'My Lord,' in conversation, but I think the number gets fewer every day. This is still a snobbish country, but the time may not be dreadfully remote in which Englishmen of rank will find that the popular taste has turned, so that 'titles' may be 'abolished' by custom, though sanctioned by law."

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE GRAIN CROP of the Pacific slope is reported as being unprecedented in the annals of that land of plentiful harvests. The wheat crop of Livermore and San Joaquin Valleys, California, is estimated at from twelve to fifteen million bushels, which have all been gathered and bagged, and are lying in heaps along the Central Pacific Railroad awaiting transportation. One field in the Livermore Valley covers sixty-eight thousand acres, or over one hundred and six square miles, and has yielded forty bushels of first-class wheat to the acre. Within seven days the wheat yield of that large farm was standing stacked within sight of the railway in the hempen sacks commonly used for sending grain to market, and the cost of the sacks for that farm alone was $30,000.

FORRESTER, the alleged murderer of Mr. Nathan, has been discharged from custody in New York, the District Attorney having stated that there was not sufficient evidence to prove his guilt. He was re-arrested on the charge of not having served out his term in the Joliet (Ill.) Penitentiary.

ALREADY heavy embankments are being constructed along the line of the Union Pacific Railroad to protect the track from snow. The blockade of last winter will be prevented if engineering, labor and expense can reach that point. It must be reached, or the road on the thirty-fifth parallel will have a decided advantage over the middle route.

The official report of the investigation into the Metis disaster throws the responsibility upon Captain Burton and the two pilots, and attaches some blame to Doane, the first mate. The licenses of the captain and pilots are revoked.

BASE BALL.

BOSTON VS. MUTUAL.

At Boston, Sept. 21, the Boston defeated the Mutual by a score of 11 to 10.

MUTUAL VS. ATHLETIC.

At Philadelphia, Sept. 25, the Mutual defeated the Athletic by a score of 14 to 13.

ATHLETIC VS. BALTIMORE.

At Baltimore, Sept. 26, the Athletic defeated the Baltimore by a score of 11 to 6.

CRICKET.

At Germantown, Philadelphia, Sept. 21, 23, and 24 the English twelve met the most determined opposition that has been made against them in this country; in fact, they so narrowly escaped being defeated, that the opinion of every one was, if another game were played the victory would be a sure one for the Philadelphians. A prominent member of the Young America club of Germantown offered Fitzgerald, the captain of the Englishmen, $600 in gold if the twelve would stay to play another match, but the offer was refused. The bowling of Newhall and Meade of the Philadelphia twenty-two was magnificent, and Mr. Grace, the most dreaded batsman of all England, whose usual score is about 100, and who in New York made more runs alone the first day than the entire American twenty-two was disposed of in the 1st innings for 14 runs, and in the 2d for 7. The playing throughout the game on both sides was very fine. The condensed score is as follows:

Philadelphia Twenty-Two.	1st Innings,	63
	2d do.	14
Total,		187
Gentlemen of England.	1st Innings,	105
	2d do.	34
Total,		139

England wins by 2 runs and four men to be put out.

The following is a brief resume of the result of all the international matches of this year:

At Montreal the "Ten Gentlemen of England" won by one innings and 140 runs.

At Ottawa the eleven players won by one innings and 110 runs.

At Toronto the twelve players won by one innings and 105 runs.

At London the twelve won by 130 runs—playing two innings.

At Hamilton they won by one innings and 16 runs.

At New York by one innings and 139 runs.

At Philadelphia by four wickets.

The New York World of September 25, says of this match:—The cricket match between the English twelve and the Philadelphia twenty-two, which was begun on Saturday, continued on Monday, and finished yesterday, compelled the foreign gentlemen to put forth more exertions to achieve a victory than did any game which they played since leaving England. In the recent match at Hoboken, though the fielding of the twenty-two was excellent—in this respect perhaps surpassing that exhibited at Philadelphia on the part of the home cricketers—the twelve had it all their own way. The bowling was ineffective; balls were knocked all over the field. On the other hand the twenty-two were unable to punish the steady and fatal bowling of the twelve. The result was that the Englishmen won in one inning, with 139 runs to spare. This was a crushing defeat for the New York twenty-two.

Flushed with this victory the twelve went to Philadelphia, and although they achieved a hard-earned victory—and no one thought of their defeat—the general play of the twenty-two must have surprised them, as it was unexpected by the general public. Charley Newhall's was more effective than any bowling on the English side, Appleby alone excepted. Newhall actually bowled that prince of batsmen Grace, in the first inning for 14 runs, and in the second inning the same player went out for 7 runs. Ottaway was bowled in the second inning for 0, and in the first inning he made but 10 runs. The bowling of both Newhall and Meade was very effective, and it is not too much to say that if all the chances had been taken in the field the twelve would have been compelled to have exerted themselves to have averted defeat. As it was they had to play two innings, the Philadelphians having secured 63 runs in the first inning and 74 in the second, while the Englishmen made 105 in their first inning. On Monday night the score stood: Twenty-two, 137 runs in two innings; twelve, 105 runs in one inning. The twelve secured the 33 runs necessary to win yesterday on the grounds at Germantown, the twenty-two exhibiting some very brilliant play.

In many respects this was the most remarkable cricket match ever played in this country. Its result shows clearly that our young men when properly trained, make much more effective cricketers than Englishmen resident among us. The Philadelphia twenty-two are all native-born Americans. These players are young men of wealthy families, who devote themselves to this sport. They are amateur or gentlemen players, and if there were three or four such clubs within easy distance of each other the practice obtained in their friendly contests would in no long time make them amply able to meet our transatlantic cousins on equal terms. The great need of cricket in this country is more such clubs as that of Germantown. Its members are just the class of men to make the sport popular on this side of the Atlantic. There is no reason in the world why we cannot develop as good cricketers in this country as in England, and the display in the three days' contest at Philadelphia really shows that we have at least one good club. Our devotion to base ball should not blind us to the fact that cricket has merits as a popular pastime which base ball has not, and merits which appeal to a class of young men which will constantly grow in this country.

☞ "Three feet in the river," says the Courier-Journal's river man. "Are the natives allowed to obstruct navigation in this way?" replies the St. Louis Globe.

☞ Some men make a great flourish about always doing what they believe to be right, but always manage to believe that is right which is for their own interest.

☞ The ladies describe this portion of the year as the "nothing-to-wear" season.

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WIT AND HUMOR.

HOW HE DISPOSED OF THE CATS.

Max Adeler, in the Sunday Dispatch says—We are fond of cats. Unlike most persons, it pleases us, while lying in bed at night, to hear three or four cats out in the back-yard spitting and yowling and waltzing around to their own mysterious music. So we always keep a cat on hand, in order to contribute our share to the entertainment. It is a singular fact, however, that one hundred and sixty-three successive cats which we have purchased have disappeared, one after the other. We would buy a cat, and have it around for a few days; and we would place it out in the yard, on a given night, before retiring. In the morning that animal would always have disappeared. And none of them ever came back. We regarded it as a somewhat singular coincidence that the man who lives just back of us always had fireworks on the very nights that our cats disappeared. Reflecting upon this circumstance, we purchased our one hundred-and-sixty-fourth cat—a tortoise-shell—and determined to watch her. We placed her out in the yard a few nights ago, and observed her from the kitchen door. The tortoise-shell frisked around for awhile and ground out a few melodious screeches. Then she jumped upon the fence for the purpose of making acquaintances. While there, we perceived the man in the rear yard wipe that cat suddenly off of the fence into a bag. Then that scoundrel tied a string to the tail of the tortoise-shell, and affixed the other end of the cord to a sky-rocket. He then lit a match, and in about a minute that animal was swishing around among the stars without a hair on her body. We observed where the rocket fell. It was within a lot inclosed by a high fence. We went out and climbed that fence early next morning, and there lay one hundred and sixty-four rocket-sticks, each with a singed cat tied to it with a string! Now we know why we missed our pets, and if we do not souse down on that fireworks-man with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, it will be because that organization is hopelessly demoralized.

IN THE CARS.

I was riding in the cars some days ago, says our friend John, and sat along side of a fellow who was as weather-beaten as if he had been sitting six weeks astraddle of a watermelon, trying to put out the sun by spitting at it. We conversed. I said to him:

"What's your name?"

Says he, "Adolphus."

Says I, "Your mother's name?"

Says he, "Mary."

I looked amazed, and says I, "Mary, Mary! can it be possible that you are the lamb?"

Says he, "The what?"

Says I, "The lamb that Mary had?"

He revealed the fact that he was not the lamb, and he further observed, "It is all-fired hot."

Says I, "Did you ever visit a tropical climate?"

Says he, "A what?"

Says I, "A hot climate."

Says he, "Jimminy crix, stranger. I've ploughed up a side hill Fourth of July, when the sun set my straw hat on fire, and if that ain't a hot climate, why I hain't been to one as yet."

Before I had time to reply the conductor came along and shouted out "tickets."

Greeny—"I've got none."

Conductor—"Money then."

Greeny—"I haven't any."

Conductor—"Got a pass?"

Greeny—"No, I hain't got a pass."

Conductor—"Thunder and spikes, you don't expect to travel on these cars for nothing, do you?"

Greeny—"You advertise to take a fellow for nothing, anyhow."

Conductor—"How so?"

Greeny—"Why, down there in your office in Cincinnati, you've got a great big sign stuck up in store writing; it says, 'Through to New York without change.'"

The conductor dropped his anchor and put that fellow ashore right by a big white post with some black letters on it which read C 30 miles.

LOST HIS "FUNNY MAN."

A western editor says: "We have dismissed our funny man. Would that we could recall him—but entreaties, tears, and a forty horse-power steam elevator wouldn't bring him back again. He has gone over to the opposition paper, and jeers at us with the triumphant malevolence of a fiend incarnate. This is the way it all happened:

One day we made a mild joke, and we were much elated in consequence. "It's perfectly easy to be funny," we thought—"and as the running expenses of the Weekly are rather large, we'll dismiss our professional humorist and be our own funny man." So we tried it. We printed the witticism already alluded to and imagined, in our pride, that there were plenty more of the same sort where that came from.

We sat with pen suspended over a sheet of paper, and a look as much like Tennyson waiting for inspiration as we could get up. We took down the dictionary, the Concordance to Shakspeare, Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy, and Mrs. Hemans' Poems. We stared at them; and the longer we gazed the sadder we felt. Any man that can write up any subject less severe than the Stanley-Livingstone expedition, will please apply at our office. Salary no object.

A CURIOUS KIND OF ZEBRA.

A menagerie-man who bought a zebra from an individual who said that he had just arrived from Africa with the animal, kept his purchase closely confined in its cage for several weeks, until he thought a washing would do it good. Then he led it down to the creek, and gave it a good scrubbing for half an hour. At the end of that time the menagerie-man was surprised to perceive that the zebra's stripes had entirely disappeared. And now, if anybody wishes to buy an able-bodied and energetic mule, warranted to be kind in single harness and and not to suffer from home-sickness because it can't get back to Africa, such an article can be procured of a menagerie-person who is disgusted with zebras.

You have heard of Counsellor Higgins, of the State of——, who died many years ago. He was exceedingly adroit in defending a prisoner, and would sometimes laugh down an indictment for a small offence. A fellow (one Smith) being on trial for stealing a turkey, the counsellor attempted to give a good, humane turn to the affair. "Why, gentlemen of the jury," said he, "this is really a very small affair; I wonder any one could bring such a complaint into court; if we are going on at this rate we shall have business enough on our hands. Why, I recollect when I was in college, that nothing was more common than to go foraging. We used to have a good supper in this way. We did not get the poultry too often in the same place, and there was no harm done, no fault found." Notwithstanding this appeal, the jury convicted the prisoner.

After the court arose, one of the jury, a plain old farmer, meeting the counsellor, complimented him on his ingenuity. "And now, squire," said he, fixing a rather knowing look upon him, "I should like to ask you one question; which road do you take in going home, the upper or the lower?" "The lower," said the counsellor. "Well, then, it's no matter; I only wanted to observe that if you were going my way I would just jog on before you and look up my hen-house."

THE FAIRY QUEEN'S SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I dance along
To the zephyr's song,
In my cave beyond the sea.
My fountains gush,
My rivers rush,
Where I'm queen of all but thee.

The rugged walls
Of my rocky halls,
Were made by nature's hand;
The granite door,
The mossy floor,
The river's rippling sand.

And when at night
The fire-fly's light
Gleams through my mountain cave,
From quiet moor,
From battle gore,
From the crest of the ocean wave,

The fairies fly,
To my cave they hie
To dance on the moonlit strand;
My caverns sound
From roof to ground,
With the music on the sand.

Then, mortal, haste,
The pleasures taste
Of my home beyond the sea,—
The immortal bliss
Of a fairy kiss:
Oh, make me queen of thee!

E.

Leaves from a Pocket Diary.

No. 38.

The Black Walnut Coffin.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

They came into the same car in which I had a seat. I had noticed the couple back at Packenham, as they mournfully followed the black walnut coffin along the platform to see it safely placed in the car on which it was to be moved to its destination.

They had seemed loth to leave it alone then, but were advised to take seats in the passengers' carriage.

The man was tall, rather than stoutish, with a sombre-looking band of crape around his hat; the woman was shorter and stouter, dressed in a suit of black with a costly set of furs.

I glanced at them the second time, for there is a sad fascination in the sorrows of others that oftentimes brings our minds again and again to contemplate, compare, or contrast their lot with ours. They sat down silently in the same seat, and directly I fell back to musing upon my own vexatious affairs.

For several weeks I had been whirling about with all the vivacity of a little dog chasing his tail, and meeting with much the same success in my business that he does in his occupation.

We calculated that we had found at last that the nest of government swindlers burrowed in or near Dutchess county, and I had been dashing full tilt toward O——, when I was unceremoniously brought up by a streak of lightning that dotted and dashed in this way:—

"Off scent. Quarry broke covert. Get back to Foxboro' for fresh trail." "Deuce take it!" was my inelegant commentary upon the matter. "Barney's hood-winked, I'll bet my old pipe."

But I got back as fast as I could like a well-ordered sub., and was just universally out of humor, and stamping along through the rough, keen autumn wind, ready to vote that living, in a general sense, is a bore—that is, if circumstances have placed a body upon a pivot so that they must turn and whiffle at the motion of any one's hand—when I received a silent, sharp reprimand in the form of this long, polished walnut box whittled off at the ends, so that one can be driven into as small an aperture as possible. At last I pulled my hat down to the bridge of my nose, and dove into my seat, filled with grave reflections. Meanwhile the dark, autumn night was not coming down exhilaratingly. Black and ragged clouds were shutting their teeth together and crouching close down in the corners of creation, and at little way places in the woods and by country roads the wind whistled and the engine coughed, and once or twice I came so near going to sleep that a mirage of coffins with lank, stiff forms stood on end and buffeted me with winking lids.

"There," I said to myself at last, "this is heathenish; I will speak to these mourners, for sorrow likes sympathy. But how to begin was the question, for both of them seemed wholly absorbed in their own sorrowful reflections. Quite a stir at the next station gave me opportunity to ask the man as he glanced furtively out, if he was going on to F——.

"Not quite. I am to leave my wife's remains near her old home in ——."

"Then it is your wife's body that was brought on board to-night?" My voice was low and sympathetic.

He nodded, too much affected to speak.

"A sad journey," I ventured, looking sharply at the girl beside him.

"Yes," he returned, seeming to raise his reserve, at the same time that he slightly raised his broadly-craped hat. "And she was so young, and my all."

His eyes glittered with such a strange expression as he glanced at his companion—a quick, involuntary glance, that I could not interpret—and that made a crawling sensation felt in my exterior tissues; for you know what a wife-murdering epidemic has got over the country in the last ten years.

"Was she ill any length of time?"

"Slow consumption," he returned, with again that involuntary, fiery gleam toward the girl.

I was wishing that there was some way of getting a good view of her face, when she suddenly and unexpectedly turned squarely around and faced me with something so bold and defiant in her air that I quailed for an instant before her. Was she possessed of the power of divination?

Conversation fell off for some moments, and was resumed on a different subject.

"Begins to be rough travelling," said he, as we bounced over a piece of poorly-graded road.

"The late storms have washed the track badly."

"We shall get another soon, shall we not?"

"It blows like it, and a fine drizzle is already sifting outside," I went on, drawing in my hand and dropping the window a little further. Somehow no vein of conversation which we struck could sustain itself five minutes, and so we let silence reign.

As we gradually came toward ——, I found the persons in front of me becoming very restless, and endeavoring to look from the window, as if anything but chaos and old night reigned without.

"I would feel better if we had remained with the body," I heard the man say to his companion.

"I don't know," she replied, "perhaps it is as well that we didn't."

I could imagine how their consciences might upbraid them, for I was just as sure, by the glances that were exchanged between them, that something was wrong, as if they had told me so.

By and by we dashed among the station lights of ——, and the two black-robed people sprang hurriedly to their feet and went out before the train had fairly stopped.

I stepped upon the platform. Two solemn-looking middle-aged men met those in whom I was so much interested, and after a silent hand-shake moved on to receive the coffin, which was tenderly lifted and carried across the platform and placed in a wagon drawn up in the mist outside.

After a moment's necessary delay, the melancholy company moved along the foggy village streets. Like one under a spell I followed, having first learned that this 7.30 train would go on, and afterward a nine-o'clock train—express—would come along the same route.

Over the lonely, almost deserted street, rumbled the wagon, with the coffin protected by an oil-cloth from the heavy fog, and my travelling companions on the other side from me moved like dark spectres in the vapor.

Through the main part of the place, down toward the wharves they went, and I, gradually chilling to my marrow in the prickly northeast wind, kept in the shadow on the other side.

After three-quarters of an hour they halted before a dismally dark building, and one of the men knocking softly the door was opened, and I could hear the short trampling sound of men's feet that always accompanies the carrying about of a dead body, and astounded at my own conduct was turning away, when a simple, common sound struck upon my ears, and started up such a problem in my brain, that I worked vainly upon it all the way back to the station, and from there to Foxboro'. At this place I was glad to meet my brother sub., Bittern. He was quite excited.

"You got Harney's telegram?"

"Yes.

"Beats all. We thought that we had holed them, and how the Dutch they eluded us is a mystery. By far the most expert gang of counterfeiters that New York has ever been honored with. Now, three days ago, I had what I thought was reliable information that if I would get through to Packenham I could grip hold of them. We ran down, found the nest evidently just vacated, at the same time Harney's telegram rang out—'off the track.' I'd give half my next year's salary to know how they eluded us and where they evaded us, for to the best of human invention we had a trap set at every hole. Come up to Dix's and let's talk the matter over."

We were congregated closely by Foxboro's best gas-fixture, under a fading elm, near by the Dix House, and our out-door conference was cut short by a sudden shiver of the tree that sent a deluge of heavy, straggling drops on to our heads and down our necks.

"Too cool for a shower-bath," remarked my companion as we entered the bar-room, which fortunately was quite deserted.

"How large a gang do you apprehend is there connected with this game?"

"Quite impossible to tell. Probably the real workers are few, but the distributors of the spurious money are many, and the hatefullest part of it is that these modern counterfeiters use women for tools. They are connected with the gang, many of them intimately, and somehow they manage to get heaps of the spurious stuff afloat where men would be less successful. But," and Bittern let his cigar go out, while he gnawed his mustache, "how in the plain deuce they got their traps over the Packenham and —— railroad, this way, or the Olney and R—— route the other way, is what muddles my brain, when all the officials are on the alert at the different stations—"

His further remark was interrupted by my sudden ejaculation of amazement at my own previous stupidity.

"Did you sit on a hornet?" he questioned. To which I replied,

"Not exactly—but I have got a flea in my ear."

"Now," I went on, "just as true as conviction is preferable to empty surmises—a man and woman, with an elegant coffin containing the body of a friend, came down the Packenham and —— route."

"What of that?"

"I know by a score of signs and symptoms unexplainable then, that those two, clad in deep mourning, were a part of the gang."

"And the coffin?"

"Contained, instead of the man's wife, a due amount of traps."

"Is it hardly reasonable? Think a moment. Have you sufficient cause to make this assertion? I should not like to spend more time foolishly. Sum up the main points upon which you base your belief."

"It was a laugh—a short, triumphant, sarcastic woman's laugh. You recollected that I spoke of the fascination that led me after the coffin; how, myself hidden by the dense fog, I saw, without being seen; and just after the coffin had been borne within the portals of the old house by the wharf, the woman that I have named, gave utterance to that peculiar, unmirthful laugh. Will you go back to —— with me? I will bear all the responsibility of defeat."

"What—to-night?—Between fifteen and twenty miles. Could we get there in season? Could you identify the place?"

I said yes, to both questions.

We called for supper; afterward Bittern procured a strong, fresh horse, and at eleven o'clock we drove out of Foxboro'. As we rode onward conviction seemed also to seize upon my companion's mind, and then we became annoyed with fears lest by preconcerted action they had already moved again, by water conveyance.

"It is a shrewd trick, though," says Sam, "and I'll bet that this is the way they've eluded us so long—actually *bombarded* us."

The streets of —— village were entirely deserted, when at half-past two o'clock we slackened speed and drew our horses under an open shed, and expeditiously yet silently broke the slumbers of Leary and Ford of the place and of the brotherhood, and communicated our ideas, soliciting their co-operation.

I described the building into which the coffin had been conveyed.

"Yes," Laury said, "third right-hand street up from the station. Old tenement-house recently purchased, ostensibly for the purpose of remodelling into a machine-shop."

Everything, as we approached the vicinity, was quiet; the village boasted neither watchmen nor gas-fixtures. There was no sound except that of the waves lapping about the wharves, and swishing and gurgling through the fissures in the planks.

We then concluded to spend some time in reconnoitering. Our researches were so far rewarded that we found a boat—a sort of four-oared barge—moored at the foot of a kind of slip at the river-side of the building, with the sail stretched along its bottom.

"This is in case of surprises," said Ford. "I expected something of this sort. Now, then, I propose that two of us secrete ourselves under the canvas, a third station himself by the small side-door on the east wing, and the fourth, as soon as there is the least sign of life about, unhole them, as it were, by boldly demanding admittance in front."

Before daylight we had disposed ourselves as agreed upon, and for a long time no sound was heard. Finally, I was electrified by a sneeze *under* the miniature wharf against which the boat, that we were ensconsed in, rubbed her nose continually. Bittern and L from the stern, under cover of the sail, listened. We distinctly heard Ford when he let the old knocker at the front entrance fall; we also heard, a moment later, a scuffle at the side entrance, where Laury was, and two sharp reports of a pistol. With the greatest exertion alone we remained hidden, but in five minute running feet were heard, although the fog was too dense to see anything, and two or three persons pounced into the boat, cut the moorings, and were intent on pushing off, when they were palsied by being seized by the ankles and thrown down. Fortunately for us there were but two men and the woman, who had ridden in the train, in front of me. Taking them at a disadvantage, they showed but little resistance. One of them escaped. Ford and Laury's united efforts subdued the other villain, who, with craped hat and solemn tone, had acted his part of chief mourner to perfection.

After our game was well bagged, we found the coffin in the basement, which had been fitted up for the purpose of carrying on their ungodly trade. In it were dies, engravers' tools, note paper, and any amount of currency and bonds so well executed as to endanger deceiving the government elect. We had four of them, with the woman, who had played out their game, won their wristlets, and wouldn't have to bother themselves about rent and board for some time.

Couldn't forbear asking the man with the mortar-pestle whiskers and sepulchral tones, "How long have you been married?"

He stared obliquely one moment, and then replied with imperturbable gravity:

"Your query belongs to the conundrum column, and don't signify that we should answer it."

EDUCATION.

LANDLORD.—"Hobson, they tell me you've taken your boy away from the Public School. What's that for?"

HOBSON.—"'Cause the master ain't fit to teach un!"

LANDLORD.—"Oh, I've heard he's a very good master."

HOBSON.—"Well, all I knows is, he wanted to teach my boy to spell 'taters with a p!"

A ROMANTIC TRAGEDY.

Romeo and Juliet in Switzerland.

An American maiden, scarcely more than a child, daughter of an American lady of fortune and social repute, according to an extraordinary letter from the Continent, is sent out to Europe to learn the languages, under the care of "a competent governess," living in Zurich, who has also the supervision of two or three others. This maiden is about eighteen, and while at Zurich she makes the acquaintance of a young man, scarcely more than a lad, a native of Poland, residing in Switzerland to acquire the art of medicine. In time an arrangement is made by which the maiden is to teach the lad English, while he teaches her German. Our narrative is somewhat obscure as to the nature and the origin of this arrangement; but we suppose it was approved by the "competent governess." At all events, the "studies" began, and with a result that our readers may fancy. Romeo and Juliet spoke the same language; but we question if things would have turned out differently had he spoken German and she English; for love hath a language of its own, apart from the grammar and glossary. There were long walks by the brawling brooks, frequent communions, a persistence in the new study that quite drove medicine out of the young man's mind and the finer accomplishments out of that of the young lady, for, as we have said, she was sixteen and he twenty. In time the mother came from America with three other daughters. She discovered the nature of the "studies" that engrossed her child's attention, and instantly forbade them. To make the prohibition effectual, she left Zurich with her family for Lake Lucerne, leaving the young Pole to continue his study of medicine, and to find his happiness in other eyes than those of Miss Juliet.

But love, as Madame Mother might well have known, is not to be dissolved or defeated by seas or streams, or even the wild Swiss mountains. The student followed the maiden to Lake Lucerne, decorated himself in a wig and false beard and other mystifying toggery, and took apartments in a small hotel near his beloved's new home, telling a curious landlord—not without suspicions we would think in these Commune times as to the rig and whiskers—that he was in love, and that a cruel parent stood between him and everlasting peace. Then came little notes for the student, timidly handed to the hotel porter by maiden hands, and hurried meetings and strolls by the banks of the lake, where Tell is said to have split the mythical apple and to have defied Gessler's imperial *chapeau*. But Madame Mother in time discovered this, and announced that she would leave Switzerland, and Europe even, to prevent the relations which had fascinated her daughter. This cruel mandate was announced to the student, and it moved him deeply. He asked for one more interview. The next day his beloved would leave Lucerne and go to distant lands. The meeting was permitted "for twenty minutes," says our correspondent. "Are you afraid to die?" said Romeo. "No," said Juliet, "when the time comes." And in a flash the student drew a small pistol and fired it at her temples. She fell upon the ground, apparently dead. He then put the pistol to his own forehead and fired, and fell by her side. It was thought, when assistance came, that both were dead. The maiden, however, was severely but not dangerously wounded, and is now free from danger. The student was more seriously injured. It is thought, however, that youth and health will save his life; but he will never again look upon his beloved, for the shot which was to have taken his life has robbed him of his sight, and he now lies in the Gersau Hospital hopelessly blind.

Answers to Correspondents.

EGYPT, (Southern Illinois,) writes: "Being a constant reader of your valuable paper, and obtaining much useful information from the correspondents' column, I take the liberty of asking you a few questions. 1st. Is it proper for a gentleman, when visiting, to wear his overcoat and overshoes into the house, or should he pull them off before he enters? 2d. What is the most suitable gentleman's dress for an evening party? 3d. Are there any denominations of the Church that forbid the wedding-ring in marriage, if so, which are they? 4th. Where can I get some nicely WRITTEN visiting cards, and about what will be the cost of—say fifty? 5th. What do you think of my handwriting?" 1st. It is usual to remove these articles of apparel in the hall or entry of the house. It would not generally be pleasant or suitable to remove them before entering the house. 2d. The dress coat is being much worn now at evening parties, but in most places the frock coat is yet considered perfectly correct. 3d. The Quakers do not use the ring in marrying, though many ladies of the Society of Friends wear a ring after marriage. The Protestant church of Switzerland does not marry with a ring; neither do the Mormons. 4th. You had better apply to some dealer in stationery in your nearest large city, who will probably give you the necessary information. In regard to your last question (which, as you request, we do not give), if the trouble mentioned is hereditary in one or both cases, such a marriage might have serious results, as it is not uncommon for a hereditary disease to pass over one generation and settle on the next. If, on the contrary, it has resulted from special and very peculiar circumstances in their lives, and is not a family failing, there would not be so much danger in marrying, particularly if the disease made its appearance after the birth of the two persons mentioned. Of course, a disease which is now in a family, may become hereditary; and in the circumstances you mention, it would undoubtedly be the safest and most prudent policy for the parties not to marry.

CLIO, (Philadelphia,) writes: "Please inform me whether any reply has been made to the strictures in "Macaulay's History of England" upon the character and actions of William Penn? If any defence has been published, which is considered satisfactory by his friends, I should be glad to know its title." The principal work published on this subject is "The New Examen, or an Inquiry into Events relating to certain portions of Lord Macaulay's History of England" by John Paget; published by Blackwood & Son, of London, in 1861. This considers not only the strictures on William Penn, but several other disputed portions of Macaulay's History.

J. W. M., (Silver Hun, Ark.,) asks: "Will you be so kind as to give me a grammatical form how I shall ask the parents of my intended for her?" Do you wish to address them orally, or by letter? We should advise you, by all means, to try the former. Your difficulty can be settled much more readily and satisfactorily by word of mouth than by the pen. If you have got safely over the dreadful ordeal of asking the young lady, you can surely muster sufficient courage to address the father. If you prefer to make your appeal by letter, say: "I dearly love your daughter; I am satisfied that she returns my love; and I earnestly hope for your consent to make her my wife. My means of supporting her are ——," &c., or something to that effect.

IGNORANCE, (Batesville, Ark.,) writes: "Allow me to ask you two or three questions. What is the highest mountain in the world? How are mackerel caught, and where? Who is going to be the next President of the United States? Also, for what can I get files of the Post for the years 1870 and 1871?" The highest mountain known is Mount Everest, in the Himalaya range, in Southern Asia. Its height is 29,002 feet, being considerably more than five miles above the sea level. Mackerel are caught both by the hook and by the net. They occur abundantly in many parts of the world, as in the English seas, in the Mediterranean, at the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, and the East Indies. They frequent in great numbers the American seas, and are caught abundantly on the New England coast. The answer to your third question we will defer until after the November election, when we shall be happy to furnish you the desired information. We cannot furnish complete files of the Post for the years mentioned.

A. F. M., (Mexico, Mo.,) asks: "Please let me know through your paper, what is the real name of the author of Adam Bede, The Mill on The Floss, &c." Her maiden name was Marian Evans. She was married, a few years ago, to the distinguished author, G. H. Lewes.

A SUBSCRIBER, (Richland, Ky.,) writes: "Will you be so kind as to answer the following questions? 1st. How far advanced should a fellow who wishes to study law be, when starting to a law school? Would a common school education be sufficient? 2d. What books should he get to commence his studies in? 3d. About how long would it take a person, with tolerably good common sense, and who wishes to make law one of the studies of his life, to graduate and get a license to practice? Now I suppose you will say it is owing to the interest he takes in his own education. Well, if he studies hard and takes an interest in what he is studying, I don't suppose it would take him so long as one who didn't care. Would it?" Certainly not. Care and attention are necessary to make progress in any study. At the same time original ability and taste for the study are important items, and the rapidity of a man's advancement depends largely on these. With close study it would probably take you four or five years to become sufficiently versed in law to graduate with credit to yourself. There is no special education necessary to commence the study. You only need to be well grounded in the rudiments of education. As for the books necessary it will be best to wait till you apply to the law school, and learn what particular books are used there.

N. A. G., (Greenville, Mich.,) writes: "I would like to have you answer a few questions for me. 1st. Where may I find the history to prove that Columbus was not the first discoverer of America, and the price thereof? 2d. 1284 is 2¼ of 12½; or more than what number? Please work it by figures and give a full explanation, for I do not understand the principle to work it. 3d. How much corn must a man take to mill to receive just one bushel of meal, allowing 1-16 for toll and waste? In solving this problem why do you take 16-16 instead of 17-16. 4th. Where may I get the books necessary to learn Short Hand writing, and the price thereof? Can an ordinary scholar learn, with a teacher?" 1st. The latest work on the subject is the "Pre-Columbian Discovery of America by Northmen," by S. F. De Costa, published in Albany in 1868. It would be worth probably $1.50. 2d. We do not understand your meaning. Neither do we wish to answer arithmetical problems in this column. 3d. If a deduction of 1-16 be made from the corn, there will be 15-16 left. To make it up to a full bushel, an extra 1-16 must be added. But this latter fraction is 1-15 of 15-16. Hence 1-15 of the original amount must be added, which, in addition to the whole amount, 15-15, makes 16-15. But, we repeat here, we do not wish to solve arithmetical questions in this column. 4th. We can procure you the necessary works. The price of Graham's "Hand Book of Standard Phonography," the latest and most complete work, is, we think, $1.50. An ordinary scholar can learn with the aid of a teacher, great perseverance, and some natural adaptability to the study. It is a difficult study, and needs close and long application.

AGILE K. A., (Danville, Cal.) We refer you to the notice at the head of the first column of our fourth page. Everything has so risen in price of late years, that two dollars will scarcely go further than one used to. We have waited in vain for things to come down, and so we must in simple justice to ourselves go up. We are pleased to see from numerous letters already received, that the great mass of our subscribers will acquiesce in the change of prices without a dissenting word.

KATYDID.—A lady friend says that there is nothing "out of date" in the color or material of your sample. It would look well for the street, if you can manage to make a modern suit out of it. Trim with fringe and bands of velvet a shade darker.

A. OF S. Your story is accepted.

PLAIN.—Your article is respectfully declined. It is good enough, but too much in the style of "Zig." We do not like our correspondents to encroach upon each other's peculiar domain. Let each write in his or her own natural, unaffected way, and that will give our readers due variety.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

A GOOD PLAN.—An American traveller abroad, who suffered much by the importunities of guides whose services he did not need, adopted the following plan:—"When I see one approaching," said he, in commenting on the matter, "I at once offer to guide him. It is an idea from which he does not rally in time to annoy us. The other day I offered to show a persistent fellow through an old ruin for fifty kreutzers; as his price for showing us was forty-eight, we did not come to terms."

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

SHOO-FLY CHARADE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I feel, I feel, I feel,
My first now in my hand.
I know, I know, I know,
My second rules this land.
I see, I see, I see,
My third sail o'er the sand
That buried lies beneath the bosom of old ocean grand.
Tell me the answer now!
Tell me the answer now!
Tell me the answer now!
My whole you learnt at school, I trow.

Ft. Snelling, Minn. GAHMEW.

ANAGRAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

NAMES OF TOWNS AND CITIES.

1. North scale.
2. Stop, I went.
3. Spare not.
4. A night snow.
5. Ray's book.
6. Met no peril.
7. Go get owner.
8. Mat's dream.
9. No news earl.
10. War it tells.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

A small island.
A steeple.
Name of a star.
A mistake.
Water from the eyes.

II.

A western city.
One who digs in the mines.
Aged.
A lady's name.
An open space of ground.

III.

A vessel of pleasure.
To repress, to calm, to pacify.
To embrace, to enclose.
Speed, hurry.
Printing letters, emblems.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

ALGEBRAICAL PROBLEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A and B travelled toward Philadelphia at the same time, on the same road, and at the same rate of speed. Just 20 minutes *after* A passed a station-house exactly 58 miles from Philadelphia, he *overtook* a drove of sheep, which were proceeding at the rate of 3 miles in two hours; and 2 hours later *met* an express which was proceeding at the rate of 9 miles in 4 hours. B *overtook* the same drove 45 miles from Philadelphia, and met the express precisely 40 minutes before he came to a village known to be 31 miles from Philadelphia.

Where was B when A arrived in Philadelphia? and at what rate were they travelling?

Erie, Erie Co., Pa. ARTEMAS MARTIN.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

MISCELLANEOUS ENIGMA—Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.—Ecclesiastes, chap xi., verse 1. ENIGMA—"Return good for evil."

CHARADE—Cartridge. (Cart-Ridge.)

PUZZLE—Owen Meredith—Lucile.

WORD SQUARES—

I.	II.	III.
ERROR	VISIT	BURST
RAISE	IRATE	UNITE
RIGID	SABER	RIGOR
OSIER	ITEMS	STORM
REDRY	TERSE	TERMS

ALGEBRAICAL PROBLEM—A put in 30 horses at first. A must pay $121.68, and B $94.32.

RECEIPTS.

TOMATO CATSUP.

Take ripe tomatoes and scald them just sufficient to allow you to take off the skin; then let them stand for a day, covered with salt; strain them thoroughly to remove the seeds. Then to every two quarts, add three ounces of cloves, two of black pepper, two nutmegs, and a very little Cayenne pepper, with a little salt. Boil the liquor for half an hour, and then let it cool and settle. Add a pint of the best cider vinegar, after which bottle it, corking and sealing it tightly. Keep it always in a cool place.

Another Way.—Take one bushel of tomatoes, and boil them until they are soft. Squeeze them through a fine wire sieve, and add half a gallon of vinegar, one pint and a half of salt, two ounces of cloves, quarter pound of allspice, two ounces Cayenne pepper, three tablespoonfuls of black pepper, five heads garlic, skinned and separated. Mix together, and boil about three hours, or until reduced to about one-half. Then bottle without straining.

PICKLED TOMATOES.

Always use those which are thoroughly ripe. The small round ones are decidedly the best. Do not prick them, as most receipt books direct. Let them lie in strong brine three or four days, then put them down in layers in your jars, mixing with them small onions and pieces of horseradish; then pour on the vinegar (cold), which should be first spiced as for peppers; let there be a spice bag to throw into every pot. Cover them carefully, and set them by in the cellar for a full month before using.

Another Way.—Take small, smooth tomatoes, not very ripe; scald them until the skin will slip off easily, and sprinkle salt over them. After they have stood twenty-four hours, drain off the juice, and pour on a boiling hot pickle, composed of one pound of sugar to every quart of vinegar, and two teaspoonfuls each of cinnamon and cloves. Drain off the liquid, scald it, and pour it on them again, every two days for a week, and they will require no further care.

TOMATOES IN A NEW FASHION.

The following method of preparing tomatoes for the table, we are assured by one who has made the experiment, is superior to anything yet discovered for the preparation of that excellent article. Take good, ripe tomatoes, cut them in slices, and sprinkle over them finely pulverized white sugar, then add claret wine sufficient to cover them.

HOW TO MAKE TOMATO FIGS.

Pour boiling water over the tomatoes in order to remove the skins; then weigh them and place them in a stone jar, with as much sugar as you have tomatoes, and let them stand two days; then pour off the syrup, and boil and skim it until no scum rises. Then pour it over the tomatoes, and let them stand two days, as before, then boil and skim again. After the third time, they are fit to dry, if the weather is good; if not, let them stand in the syrup until drying weather. Then place on large earthen plates or dishes, and put them in the sun to dry, which will take about a week, after which pack them down in small wooden boxes, with fine white sugar between each layer. Tomatoes prepared in this manner will keep for years.

TOMATO PRESERVES.

Take the round yellow variety as soon as ripe, scald and peel; then to seven pounds of tomatoes add seven pounds of white sugar, and let them stand over night. Take the tomatoes out of the sugar and boil the syrup, removing the scum. Put in the tomatoes and boil gently fifteen or twenty minutes; remove the fruit again and boil until the syrup thickens. On cooling, put the fruit into jars and pour the syrup over it, and add a few slices of lemon to each jar, and you will have something to please the taste of the most fastidious.—*Germantown Telegraph.*